

**THE CHURCHES AND ETHNIC IDEOLOGY
IN THE RWANDAN CRISES (1900-1994).**

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Declaration

**I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work
and constitutes the result of my research in the subject.**

Tharcisse Gatwa.

Abstract

It has been assumed that the 1994 Rwandan genocide and massacres during which more than a million of human beings were killed resulted from the “Hutu Power” ideology of the Habyarimana regime (1973-1994). The perspective of this thesis rests on new lines of reasoning looking at the root causes of that ideology from two angles. Firstly, from 1880’s Rwanda was subjected to external influences which constructed a meta-narrative founded on the Hamite myth defending the “Batutsi supremacy”. Secondly, the local elite, comprising the traditional Batutsi nobility, then the educated and the post-independence Bahutu ethno-politicians assimilated these constructs.

In fact, the group of people, the Banyarwanda, which the explorers, then the missionaries encountered, were distributed in three social categories: the Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa. These people had been living relatively peacefully together sharing many common factors including: cultural unity, language, religion, major social organisations like the clan and family habits such as intermarriages. Some lineages were, however, attempting to create their own identity. Out of that encounter between the West and Rwandan society, the image of Rwanda which was constantly projected was of a land dominated by a “race” of “Hamites of Caucasian origin who arrived in Rwanda from Ethiopia or Egypt”. The ‘Batutsi’ were chosen by the new rulers, colonialists and the missionaries to promote “Western civilisation founded on Christianity”. The other groups, the Bahutu and Batwa constituted the mass of “roturiers” relegated to a status of a second category citizens. Discriminatory policies were set up in cultural, subcultural and political practices to reinforce the so-called differences in schools, evangelism, public sphere. An ethnic ideology, this thesis argues, emerged out of that meta-narrative.

The emancipation in the colonies which occurred in the 1940s/50s brought the victims of that discrimination to stand against the Hamite supremacy. The conservative ruling class, entrenched in their feelings of supremacy, clashed with those petitioning for more justice and equity. Surprisingly, the former defenders of the Hamite theory, the colonial rulers and the Catholic Church converted to the Bahutu cause. These combined actions generated the 1959 social revolution which initiated the Bahutu rule, at the same time, left society fractured. A new ideology claiming the “rule of the indigenous majority” versus the “Hamites, foreign conquerors” was born. Subsequently, the shadow of the Hamite myth blocked any chance of healing the wounds. There was a need to bring about reconciliation. But in both cases, before and after the independence, the intervention of the Churches like the mediation in the 1990’s crises, seems to have been an attempt to safeguard the triumph of the “Christian Kingdom in the heart of Africa”. The Church hierarchy had pursued a model of Church-State relationships legitimising a world-view ideology of the MRND system.

To restore a social harmony, a change of attitude is needed from all those who played a key role in the Rwandan conflict. And to become a true serving community, faithful to the Gospel, the Churches, this thesis suggests, must confess guilt and repent. Then, if they adopt a *Listening Ecclesiology*, they can be a true moral and mediating force between the various strata of society.

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to:

My deceased Father and to my Mother who elevated their children above ethnic divide

To special persons who never betrayed their Rwandanity and whom I consider alive though they passed away during the 1994 tragedy:

Israël Havugimana my dear and close friend, a person who lived what he believed.

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Abbreviations and some relevant Rwandan terms

Abanyarwanda: population of Rwanda include the three groups:

(A) Bahutu (pl), (u) Muhutu (sing)

(A) Batutsi (pl), (u) Mututsi (sing)

(A) Batwa (pl), (u) Mutwa(sing)

Karinga: emblem-drum of the reigning dynasty, the Bahindiro lineage, a faction of the Banyiginya clan

AACC: All Africa Conference of Churches

ABRECSA: Alliance of Reformed Churches in South Africa

ADL: Association pour la Défense Des Droits de l'homme et des Libertés Publiques

AEBR: Association des Eglises Baptistes au Rwanda

AEE: African Evangelistical Enterprise

AMECEA: African and Mauritius Episcopal Conferences of East Africa.

ANC: African National Congress

APROSOMA: Association pour la Promotion Sociale des Masses

ARBEP: Association Rwandaise pour le bien-être Familial

ARDES: Association Ruandaise pour le Développement Social

ARTC: Association Ruandaise de Travailleurs Chrétiens

ASSUMA: Association des Supérieurs Majeurs

AVP: Association pour les Volontaires de la Paix

BCMS: Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society, formed by dissidents from CMS

BEM: Baptême Eucharistie et Ministère

BUFMAR: Bureau pour les formation Médical Agrées au Rwanda

CBK: Communauté Baptiste du Kivu ex-Zaire)

CEC: Comité de Contact des leaders des Eglises

CDR: Coalition pour la Défense de la République

CERAI: Centre d'Enseignement Rural et Artisanal Intégré

CICCU: Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union

CIDPDD: Centre International pour le Développement et le Progrès des Droits

CLADHO: Concertation des ligues et Associations des Droits de l'homme

CMML: Christian Mission in Many Lands (Inkuru Nziza mission in Kigali)

CMS: Church Missionary Society

CND: Conseil National de Développement (former Rwanda parliament)

CPR-SECOM: CPR, Service de Communication

CPR: Conseil Protestant du Rwanda

CRAP: Commission de relance des activités pastorales

CSM: Christian Student Movement

CSCNWW: Centre for the Studies of Christianity in the Non-Western World

EKD: Evangelical Kirk in Deutschland

EPR: Eglise Presbytérienne au Rwanda

FOR: Forum des Organisations pour la Reconciliation

FIDH :International Federation of Human Rights

UIDH :Inter-African Union of Human Rights and peoples.

CIDPDD/IDHRDD) : Centre International of Human Rights and of Persons et Democratic Development

JOC: Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne

LDGL: Ligue des Droits de l'Homme dans les Grands Lacs

LIPREDHOR: Ligue pour la Promotion des Droits de l'Homme au Rwanda

LWF: Lutheran World Federation

MDR-PARMEHUTU: Mouvement Démocratique Républicain PARMEHUTU

MINUAR (UNAMIR): United Nations Military Action for Rwanda

MIR: Mouvement International pour la Réconciliation

MRND: Mouvement Révolutionnaire National Pour le Développement

NPI: New Park Initiative

NRA: National Resistance Army

OCAM: Organisation Commune Africaine et Mauritienne

ONAPO: Office National de la Population
ORINFOR: Office Rwandais d'Information
PACLA: Panafrican Christian Leadership Assembly
PARMEHUTU: Parti du Mouvement de l'Emancipation Hutu
PDC: Parti Démocrate Chrétien
PL.: Parti Libéral
PSD: Parti Social Démocrate
RADER: Rassemblement Démocratique Rwandais
RPF: Rwanda Patriotic Front
RTL: Radio Télévision des Mille Collines
SAT: Service d'Animation Théologique (du diocèse de Butare)
SBMPC: Société Belge des Missions Protestantes au Congo
SDN: Society des Nations
UEBR: Union des Eglises Baptistes au Rwanda
UNAR: Union Nationale Rwandaise
ANCHOR: United Nation High Commission for Refugees
UPRONA: Union pour le Progrès National (Burundi)
VEM(UEM): United Evangelical Mission
WACC: World Association for Christian Communication
WCC: World Council of Churches
WRA: World Reformed Alliance

Chronology of Key events in Rwanda:

- 1853 Enthroning of King Kigeli IV Rwabugiri
- 1861 John Henning Speke collects the information on Rwanda
- 1884-1885 Berlin Conference on Congo
- 1892 Oscar Baumann, the first European to cross Rwanda
- 1897 Enthroning of King Yuhi V Musinga. Captain Ramsay presents to the Royal court at Rwanda a letter of protection and the German empire flag.
- 1900 Foundation of the first White Fathers Missionary stations in Save and Zaza.
Dr Richard Kandt is the first European to be received by King Yuhi V Musinga.
- 1903 Baptism of the first Catholic Catechumens
- 1907 Foundation of the first Protestant Missions in Zinga and Kirinda by Dr Johanssen.
Dr Richard Kandt became the first Governor of Rwanda.
Father Classe became Vicar Apostolic of Catholic Missions in Rwanda. Kabgayi, created in 1905 became the headquarters of the Catholic Church.
- 1910 Fixation of the borders between the German, British and Belgian colonies.
Father P. Loupias of Rwaza mission in the north was assassinated by Rukara
- 1911 Baptism of the first Protestant catechumens in Kirinda
- 1912 The Ndungutse and Chief Basebya revolt in the north. Lt Gudowius, Governor a.i. and Chief Rwubusisi conducted punitive expedition to impose the Musinga's and the colonial rule
- 1914 First tax imposed on each male adult.
Beginning of the First World War.
- 1916 Invasion of the Belgian troops.
The German missionaries left Rwanda.
- 1919 The Versailles' Treaty. The Dutch Ost Africa is ceased to Britain and Belgium.
Rwanda and Burundi became Belgian colonies.
- 1921 The SBMPC took over the Bethel Missions
- 1922 Installation of the first Mission station of CMS in Gahini
Father Classe ordained bishop continues to head the Catholic Church till his death in 1945 in Bujumbura
- 1924-1933 Belgian colonial reforms. Suppression of autonomous Bahutu monarchies.
Grouping of the population with identity cards ascribing the population to ethnic origin (Hutu, Tutsi or Twa).
Mgr Classe opposed the nomination of Bahutu to positions of chiefs.
- 1930 Revocation of Musinga followed in 1931 by the enthroning of his son Rudahigwa. Impetus of Tornado, the Catholic mass conversions.
- 1936 Beginning of Protestant Revival in Gahini, a CMS- Ruanda-Mission station
- 1946 Consecration of Rwanda and its people to Christ the King and the Virgin Mary by King Mutara III Rudahigwa
- 1952 Father A. Bigirimwami is ordained first African bishop of the Belgian colonies
- 1956 Father André Perraudin is ordained by A. Bigirimwami bishop of Kabgayi
- 1957 Publication of the petition of 9 Bahutu leaders.
- 1958 Rejection of the petition of the Bahutu leaders by 14 ' senior Councillors of the king of Rwanda
- 1959 Pastoral letter of Bishop Perraudin, Primate of the Catholic Church.
Death of King Mutara Rudahigwa in Bujumbura. Enthroning of Kigeli V Ndahindurwa.
- 1959-1962 Uprisings and then social revolution of the Bahutu. Many Rwandans mostly, Batutsi died, others went to exile
- 1961 Abolition of Monarchy and its symbols, particularly, Karinga
- 1962 Rwanda became independent under the rule of the Parmehutu party of Grégoire Kayibanda
- 1963/64 Attacks of the 'Inyenzi'(The Batutsi rebels exiled in neighbouring countries). Genocide massacres of Batutsi ' in Gikongoro region.
- 1973: Violence in schools. Led by Major-General Habyarimana, the army overthrew Kayibanda.
- 1974-1981:(!) Kayibanda and his collaborators were assassinated under arrest in the Ruhengeri prison

1975: Creation by Habyarimana of the MRND, sole political organisation in the land
Two years later, Bishop Vincent Nsengiyumva became member of its leading organ, the Central Committee and Chairman of its Social Affairs Commission

1990: - Visit of the Pope in Rwanda (6-9 September)

- 1 October attack of the Rwanda Patriotic Front from Uganda in the north.
- 4 October arrest of 10,000 Batutsi and Bahutu opponents to the regime
- 1991-1993 massacres of Batutsi and Bahutu opposed to the regime in various regions, Kibirira, Bigogwe, Murambi, Bugesera.
- June 1991 promulgation of a new Constitution accepting multiparty politics.
- First meeting for 30 years of the Rwandan Church leaders, the refugees and the Rwandan government under the hospices of the AACC.
- Creation of new political parties. The opposition pressured for political changes
- April 1992, Church leaders facilitated the forming of a coalition Government of 5 political parties. The MRND keeps 50 % of the posts and the key departments (Defence, Interior and Security. The Cabinet is led by a Prime Minister from Opposition which also keeps the Foreign Affairs.
- Beginning of Peace talks with the RPF in Arusha/ Tanzania without Churches.

1993 Signature of the Peace Agreement:

- There must be a fundamental share of power in the Cabinet, the Parliament and the Administration and army: the two armies (governmental and RPF) must integrate on an almost equal basis.
- Most of Powers are in the hands of the government led by a Prime Minister from the major Opposition party, the MDR.
- A contingent of 2500 UN peace troops might supervise the implementation of the accord for a 22 months transitional period out of which democratic elections should be organised. The troops were only available end of December. The Belgians were the majority, but Belgium provides the most significant contingent(600 men) equipped.
- January to March 1994 all the attempts to install the Transitional institutions including the RPF failed.
- April 6, 22.30 Habyarimana, together with the President of Burundi, Cyprien Ntaryamira, died in a plane shot down near the President's residence in Kanombe.
- 7 April to July 1994 genocide massacres of the Batutsi and the Bahutu favourable to the Peace Agreement or opposed to the massacres; the Moderate Prime Minister, Mrs Agathe Uwiringiyimana and many members of her Cabinet were killed.

On 8 April, former Speaker of the Parliament, Dr. T.Sindikubwabo sworn in as President, Jean Kambanda as Prime Minister of the interim government. They gave a go-ahead to the Presidential Guard, the Militia Interahamwe and of the MRND, abahuzamugambi of the CDR and the bureaucrats of the regime to perpetrate the genocide within two weeks.

-The More than a million died.

- May 1994 Catholic and Protestant Church leaders met in Kabgayi and published a message in which they failed to name and condemn the perpetrators of the genocide massacres
- July 1994 RPF took Kigali. The interim government, exiled in south moved to Zaire and forced almost 2 millions of people to exile.
- October 1996 war of Zaire. Some refugees were repatriated; many others started a long odyssey in the deep Equatorial Forests in the west where thousands died.

A map of East Africa and the surrounding regions. Countries labeled include Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zaire (Zambia), Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa. The Great Lakes region is highlighted, with Lake Tanganyika and Lake Kivu specifically labeled. Rwanda is shown as a small country within the Great Lakes region, bordered by Uganda to the north, Tanzania to the east, and Zaire to the south. The map also shows the Nile River and the Red Sea.

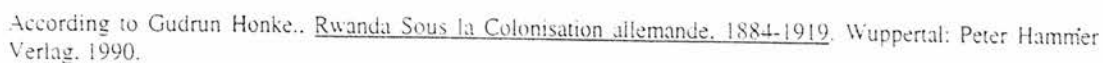


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Prologue

And the Genocide Happened.

For present and future generations of Rwandans, 1994 will remain the point of reference for the most horrific trauma experienced by the whole nation - the genocide in which more than one million human beings were killed. For three years I have been reflecting on the factors and circumstances which led to it. I have wanted to begin this story with a personal testimony of what I experienced as the state organisation of the genocide from the early days of horrific events.

On the evening of the 6 April 1994 the plane carrying the president of Rwanda, Major-General Juvenal Habyarimana together with his colleague from Burundi, Cyprien Ntaryamira, was shot down. The two Presidents together with their delegations, died when the plane crashed in Habyarimana's residence in Kanombe, Kigali. A few hours after the announcement of the murder on RTL Radio, the city was plunged again into a similar nightmare to the night of the 4th October 1990¹. At 6 a.m. various sources of information confirmed the relentless slaughter of opposition leaders, the Batutsi and human rights activists².

On 7th April at 7.30 a.m. Israel Havugimana, the Secretary of the African Evangelistic Enterprise (AEE) who was a friend from secondary school days and a long-time partner in the Christian peace initiatives) called me from his residence, three miles away. He told me: "People in military uniform came to my house. They told us to lie down in the sitting room, beat us, broke everything, took money and some commodities and then left". But less than an hour later when I called Israel there was no reply. Two hours after, Olivier Iyakaremye, a member of the Bible Society of Rwanda Board phoned from Gikondo to say: "Israel is dead". His neighbours from "Médecins sans Frontières", a French Medical Aid Organisation, heard several shootings in his house; when the shooting stopped, there was no sign of life. Later, the same neighbours rescued 4 years old Danny, from among the dead bodies. She was the youngest of Havugimana's daughters.

¹ At that time the Rwandan army simulated an RPF attack in the capital causing bomb explosions and shooting the whole night. They then justified the arrest, torture and imprisonment of Tutsi, any opposition and other undesirable elements of the regime. At 5.30 a.m. Radio Rwanda started broadcasting the communiqués of the minister of Defence, inviting the population to remain calm and not to move from their houses. Then it began to broadcast classical music.

² April, 7th at 6.30 am two close friends Dominique Nkiramacumu and Israel Havugimana, colleagues in different Christian and Human rights organisations, who lived between the Parliament building (position of RPF troops) and the headquarters of the UN troops phoned to announce the deterioration of the situation in their area. There had been bombings in *Hotel Chez Lando*, where the owner, Landoald Ndasingwa, who was also the Minister of Social Affairs, had his residence. Ndasingwa was killed together with his Canadian wife, and their two children and other relatives. Among other personalities killed in hours of early the 7th of April 1994 were, the President of the Constitutional Court, Joseph Kavaruganda, the Minister of Agriculture and President of the Social Democratic Party, Frederic Nzamurambaho; the Minister of Information, Faustin Rucogoza; the Director of the Cabinet of Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Dr Deo Habimana and a close aide to the President of the MDR; these were all killed while the latter had gone in hiding.

I phoned D. Sezibera, the Secretary of the Cabinet of the Prime Minister who was also a close friend and member of my Church. I asked him if the Prime Minister was going to broadcast an appeal for calm to avoid the revenge of the President's death by the extremists. Sezibera responded in an unrecognisable voice: "the Prime Minister, Mrs. Uwiringiyimana, was trying to get to Radio-Rwanda when she was attacked by the Presidential Guard. There was eventually a counter-attack from the soldiers of the MINUAR force that protected her", Sezibera reported³. Neither she nor her nominated successor, Faustin Twagiramungu were now contactable, he told me. But suddenly I could hear the voice of Sezibera's wife, Xaverine, "turashize we, nimudutabare! Bari mu kurasa kwa Baboab. Ngaba baraje" (we are going to be killed. They are bombing Baboab's Hotel next to us! They are coming here)⁴.

On that day, the 7 April, the situation deteriorated rapidly. Information was coming by telephones and faxes about the assassination of several politicians including the Prime Minister, Mrs Agathe Uwiringiyimana and her husband. Their guard, 10 UN Belgian soldiers were disarmed while trying to protect the Prime Minister. Transferred into the Kigali barracks, they were tortured, killed and mutilated by the Presidential Guard. In the Jesuit centre of Remera-Kigali, 11 priests and nuns were killed by the Presidential guard, 500 yards from the headquarters of the UN military peace troops. Several young ladies were killed in the residential house of JOC⁵ for functionaries, next door to the headquarters of the White Fathers. Charles Shamukiga a successful businessman, founder of a human rights organisation, called the Association for Volunteers of Peace (AVP) and Consul of Luxembourg in Rwanda was also reported to have been killed.

The killings occurred not only in Kigali but also in Gisenyi and Cyangugu. At Rambura parish (the native village of President Habyarimana in Gisenyi, in the catholic diocese of Nyundo, three priests were killed⁶. In the capital city the massacres and looting happened quickly in Kiyovu, Gikondo, Remera and Kacyiru⁷. In Cyangugu, several people including a district medical doctor, Ignace Nagapfizi, a magistrate, Joseph Kayihura, a businessman, Karangwa were killed, while refugees flooded into the Churches. In Kibungo there were several thousand refugees in the Churches, in the parishes of Rwamagana, Zaza, Kibungo while barricades were established on the roads and borders preventing freedom of movement. On 8 April 1994, 25 teachers at the Junior seminary in Nyundo and four clergymen: Father Augustin Ntagara, Adrien Nzanana, Déo Twagirayezu, and a Josephite brother were killed.

³ The story proved to be half-true. There was no response from the UNAMIR (United Nations Military Peace Keeping Force for Rwanda) which was disarmed, brought to the Kigali-centre military camp, tortured and killed.

⁴ Their neighbours, the Hotel Baboab belongs to a former army officer, Stany Sibomana, a member as well as Sezibera of the MDR opposition party. Sezibera jumped the wall of his residence. For two months he lived underground in the home of a Muslim family. His family was saved by an RPF soldier disguised as a member of the Interahamwe militia.

⁵ Jeunesse Ouvrière Catholique (Catholic Youth Workers' organisation).

⁶ Those killed in Muramba parish were: Father Spiridion Kageyo, Antoine Niyitegeka, Antoine Habiakare. Among the victims in Gisenyi were, 2 teachers in the Nyundo secondary school: Mr Semucyo and Mrs Kanzayire.

⁷ White Fathers, Rwanda., Fax no 2 April, 7 1994. 13.45 p.m. and fax no 3, 16.35 p.m. Archives of White Fathers, Brussels.

The Roman Catholic bishop of Nyundo, Wenceslas Karibushi was wounded but miraculously a Rwandan officer rescued him from being buried alive by the militia. Some Diplomats tried to meet with the MRND leaders in the Capital but only the ambassadors of USA and France attended due to lack of security⁸. A meeting of some army officers asked the 'government' to proceed with the installation of the institutions of the Arusha Accord; the Government, Parliament and an integrated Army and Civil Administration. From the 8 April onwards, it was no longer possible to exchange information as the only means were the telephones which had been cut off in different sectors of the city including ours at Kacyiru. From then on, only the two media, Radio RTLM and Radio Rwanda, now under the control of the extremists were openly calling on the population to identify the *inyenzi* (cockroaches) who were hiding among them and to hand them over to soldiers⁹.

In Kibungo, the Roman Catholic diocese headquarters was affected from the 9 April. Father A. Ruterandongozi was one of the first to be killed. From then on several regions of the prefecture e.g. Sake, Zaza, Gasatsa, Gahini, Rwamagana were badly affected. In Kigufi monastery (Nyundo diocese in Gisenyi), the massacres began with the killing of 7 people including three Priests and a Brother. In Nyamirambo, after the massacres of the 8th April in the parish, the soldiers returned and killed indiscriminately a considerable number of people in the Josephites' centre and in College St André. Several people were killed in the Dominican Congregation headquarters. "Witnesses speak of a river of blood," wrote Guy Theunis of the White Fathers. Equally, on the 8th in Gikondo Catholic parish, 61 people were killed and 13 seriously injured. Father S. Felipok of the Pallotti Congregation spent more than a hour bargaining in vain with the Gendarmes¹⁰. The latter retreated leaving the militia 'working', i.e. killing their targets.

On the 9th April 1994, Theodore Sindikubwabo, former Speaker of the monolithic MRND Parliament was sworn in as the new President of the Republic. He took up his presidency in the Hotel des Diplomates, Kigali. There, he presided over a swearing in ceremony of a new cabinet made up exclusively of the extremist wings from various parties headed by the MRND¹¹. In his swearing in speech the newly appointed Prime Minister, Jean Kambanda, gave "two weeks for the pacification" to be completed which was rightly interpreted by the observers as the time necessary to complete the systematic killing of the Batutsi and the

⁸ According to a report shared in secret with me in Kigali by a high ranking Ecclesiastic-diplomat in early January 1994, the diplomats were also divided among the 'pro-Habyarimana', 'pro-RPF' or the 'pro-opposition'. Thus, the ambassador of Belgium was called squarely "Inkotanyi" (RPF), the ambassador of France was publicly "CDR" (Pro-regime hard-liners), the ambassador of USA was said to have come to espouse the CDR position.

⁹ White Fathers, Rwanda region. Fax no 4 and no 5, April 8 1994, 11.40 p.m.

¹⁰ Rwandan Security Forces comprised three categories: The Army and the Gendarmerie with two separate chiefs of staff, under the Ministry of Defence, and the Police related the Ministry of Home Affairs (called the Ministry of Interior).

¹¹ Opposition members of Mrs Agathe Uwiringiyimana's Cabinet were killed or went into hiding whilst the MRND Ministers were protected by the army and then re-appointed in the interim cabinet.

'ibytso'. Units of gendarmes and militia were convoyed by bus around the regions that were showing resistance to the killings¹².

At this early stage France and Belgium sent military planes to evacuate their nationals and other western expatriates. Belgium pulled out its troops from the UN peace force, leaving their Rwandan colleagues or employees behind them¹³. In its session of 21 April, the UN Security Council decided to pull out its troops. The withdrawal of the international community forces was interpreted by the slaughterers as a clear signal to go ahead with their genocide plans.

"Are these people members of our group"?

After 48 hours of uncertainty hiding under the storehouse of Bible Society House and having failed to escape on foot from the compound, we were joined by a neighbouring family who were escaping from the militia attacks. We decided to pray and to wait for death or for a miracle. On the 9th April we were miraculously evacuated by a gendarme who forced us to evacuate his family including his wife of Bagogwe background to his home-village in our native region. With the Kimonyos's the convoy of 14 people of mixed 'ethnic' identities moved from the city, spending hours at the barricades negotiating the prices of individuals, trying to deny people's identities.

After crossing the obstacle of the Nyabarongo bridge, at Ruriba, south west of Kigali, we tried to join an international convoy of Americans, Canadians, German, Italians and other citizens of Western countries evacuated by road via Bujumbura. We then hoped to integrate into the convoy and to pass through the Rwanda borders and to enter Bujumbura in Burundi. The convoy stopped in Rugobagoba, 35 km from Kigali. It soon became clear that we were *persona non grata*. Questions such as "Are these people ours? And Can we let them go please" sounded like a blow of a hammer on my head. They were not spoken by an *Interahamwe*, but from one of the leaders of the convoy! We were then sent off, forced to leave the convoy, and to fend for ourselves.

¹² See our description of the killings in Kibuye and Cyangugu, Butare and the visit in these regions of the interim government.

¹³ On 8 April 1994, 3000 Tutsi refugees and 250 psychiatric patients from Ndera, near Kigali who spontaneously run toward the Belgian troops asking for protection were rebuffed by gun shootings and left behind. An hour later, they were all exterminated. Surprisingly, a senior army officer of the Belgian UN troops, Major Lemaire, spoke of a 'successful expedition'!

At the College of Technology in Kicukiro, five thousand people including the then minister for Foreign Affairs, Boniface Ngurinzira, architect of the Arusha Accord who negotiated the deployment of the UN troops were left by Belgians troops and hacked to death by the hands of killers. A survivor of the carnage, Bs.3. interviewed in Nairobi June 1994. See also Florida Ngurinzira (widow of the late Boniface Ngurinzira interviewed in Brussels, July 1995; and also her intervention before the Commission of the Belgian Parliament on the tragic events of Rwanda. In Mahoux and Verhofstadt in Decembre 1997.

In Rugunga, nationals of European countries including France, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland were gathered by French troops in the Ecole Francaise awaiting for their evacuation. 13 Rwandan employees of the embassies implored French troops unsuccessfully to be evacuated. "Then a courageous young Belgian from a volunteer organisation refused to evacuate without his Rwandan colleagues. It is then that the unfortunates had their lives saved". Witness. Me.12.

Fortunately, the road from Gitarama to Nyanza (where our friends the Kimonyo's had a residence) and the Nyanza-Birambo line in the direction of our native region, were still safe. But the sting of the question "are these people members of our group", still resounded in my ears as I remembered that the same question was asked by the killers, to select from among the Banyarwanda those who would die and those who would live.

From the 10th of April to the second half of April 1994 when I went into hiding trying to plan an escape into exile I experienced horrific tragic events and moments of uncertainty from my mother's home, in the west of the Rwanda. The following stories are samples of personal experiences and notes taken from Monday the 11th of April 1994. Here I want to show how "the genocide machinery" functioned as a perfect organisation of the authorities who were seeking to create what Rakiya Omar and Alex de Waal have rightly called, a "solidarity in the crime". In fact, as indicated in this modest account, the spectre of the genocide at the local level has been successfully spread by the authorities who thereafter washed their hands of having organised or of having orchestrated the massacres.

The Death of the Symbols

When we were exiled in the Biguhu region I hoped to pursue my commitment as a human rights activist in preventing the spread of violence. In the first instance, some of the local authorities like the councillor to whom I spoke gave the impression of being committed to the same principles. At one point I even believed I had persuaded him to resist the call for mass murder spread by the perpetrators of the massacres either on radio or by rumours. But then, it soon became clear that these authorities were executing orders from their superiors. Hence reliable accounts related in person to the present author and subsequently substantiated by the occurrence of tragic events revealed that during a so-called 'security meeting' on the Mwendo Commune, on 12 April 1994, the local authorities had received clear orders from the Burgomaster and the Prefecture authorities to eliminate the 'Tbyitso' (traitors) and 'Inyenzi (cockroaches)'.¹⁴

The first victim in the Mwendo commune was Athanase Rwamuhizi, the Presbyterian minister of Kugituntu parish and President of the Itabire district. Following the massacres that started in the neighbouring commune of Muko in the Gikongoro Prefecture, he gave asylum to the refugees in parish. Then to prepare for the threat of attack, Rwamuhizi successfully organised a watch guard. He was visited by the President of the Church, on Sunday 10 April 1994 but rejected the offer of joining some of his colleagues in Kirinda, the major Church centre, 40 km away¹⁴. Rwamuhizi probably hoped to be able to use his influence and protect the refugees mostly from the neighbouring Gikongoro prefecture. On

¹⁴ In fact, the massacres started when the Presbyterian ministers were pursuing an annual theological conference. Those who were ministering in parishes nearby, like Rwamuhizi were able to return to their parishes.

the 12 of April, killers from the neighbouring Muko commune of Gikongoro Prefecture attacked, killed Rwamuhizi and all 200 refugees¹⁵.

Rwamuhizi was a humble man who lived among the people. He was a man of original ideas, who made a significant contribution to improving the living conditions of the population in the very poor, remote and deprived region of Itabire. He initiated self-reliance projects, built a very big, spacious Church and schools, storage silos, a traditional medicine centre; he initiated a clean water project and was still extending his activities. His innovations earned him not only respect but also suspicion.¹⁶

After the death of Rwamuhizi the tragedy continued among those of Tutsi background including Church workers, teachers and agronomists. Among the victims were the family of Revd Mugemera and his predecessor in the parish of Biguhu, Revd Oscar Rwasibo. They were killed respectively in Kirinda and at Kuruganda. Meanwhile, those among the local population who were threatened continued to seek refuge in the Commune's headquarters or with families of friends¹⁷.

On Wednesday, 13 April, a prominent teacher and my head-teacher in Primary School, Michael Nyiridandi and his family joined us. Nyiridandi who had been awarded the gold medal of service by the government was a truly charismatic leader in the field of education, highly competent and full of integrity. We succeeded, despite severe pressure, in hiding them under the roof of my mother's house. I then planned to drive the whole night up to Nyanza and then to the Burundian borders to enable them to escape. But as the French proverb says "L'homme propose et Dieu dispose". My best plans were thwarted by the killers who were roaring like a raging lion¹⁸.

The next day, it was another school teacher, Ezékiel Munyarigoga a born-again evangelist, and his wife Deborah who were killed in the Biguhu Church on Thursday, 14 April 1994 where they had been hiding for a week. In a particular incident of high risk, six of us challenged the killers and hollowed out a grave between the residence of the minister and the youth centre where we buried Ezékiel and Deborah with prayer and praise for his life. We asked God that this prayer accompany all the victims of this most heinous carnage. A funeral,

¹⁵ This account was first reported to me by Ut.20., a retired school teacher.

¹⁶ The next day I spent most of the time on the phone at the Church Health Centre requesting assistance and a car from the Church leadership from Kirinda to collect the body. Finally when the car came later in the afternoon with Revd Gakindi and M.F. Ntawirukanayo in it, the group of elders and staff of the Biguhu Centre withdrew one by one. Half way to Kugituntu parish, we met the Burgomaster with the body of Rwamuhizi. Rwamuhizi who was expecting a visit of a UN staff agency was suspected of working with the RPF according to a staff member of a local health institution.(Tj.18).

¹⁷ Among the Church workers were the families of the Biguhu parish minister and Geras Mutimura. Revd Mugemera survived the massacres of Friday, the 15 April 1994 in his native parish, Kirinda but his wife and their seven children were killed.

¹⁸ In the afternoon my mother's residence was attacked by a mob of more than 50 people. They checked every centimetre of the house and were about to leave when our neighbouring villager who had two sons among the killers insisted that the refugees had not left the house. They eventually returned, found the family, took them to the nearby river, Mbirurume where they killed them cynically and cold-bloodedly. Witnesses Ns.13.,& Tm.19.

the most sacred event in the life of individuals in Rwanda culture has been refused to the victims.

After burying the Munyarigogas it was reported that the Burgomaster was at the nearby trade centre of Gahunduguru. I resolved, as we had previously done as human rights activists to confront the Burgomaster on the issue of stopping the violence. I then suggested to him that the killers who were known to the villagers be put under arrest in order to appease the rest. "If these people did not die who else would die instead"? replied the Burgomaster repeating one of his police guard's sentence. He then left in the commune car.

Due to the despair provoked in me by the threats and the escalation of these events, I decided to join David Simurabiye, the Pentecostal minister of the nearby Musongati parish for mutual comfort. When I met with him it was raining. He seemed unusually concerned. We sat in the parish office where I shared with him my loneliness and isolation due to the threats from the mobs. He told me of the refugees who were hiding in the bushes and would come in the evening for restoration and rest. We prayed, comforted one another and separated. The day after, it was reported to me that the killers surrounded the immense Pentecostal Church under construction and killed 21 persons including mothers and babies.

Simulating attacks to Ensure Solidarity in Crime

According to witnesses more than 2000 people were massacred near the parish of Biguhu, in the Mwendo Commune, on Saturday, 16 April 1994. The massacres occurred shortly after the Burgomaster visited the nearby trade centre at Gahunduguru. There, he announced his intention of 'releasing the traitors ('ibytso') and invited youngsters to 'welcome' them. A car with health clinic centre staff was sent into the surrounding areas to round up a supply of youngsters from villages allegedly to defend the Gahunduguru centre against the 'imminence' of attack. According to eye witnesses, groups of armed delinquents attacked defenceless persons. Those killed included old people, women, children, mothers with babies who had all been starving for more than a week. The 'welcoming' group finished them off in less than two hours. One man said: "I left with the car to call for supplies in the nearby villages at approximately 3 p.m. When I came back around 4 p.m., there was not one single person left alive". When I asked him how he, a worker in a Church institution, could have been involved in such a plan and why, he tried to modify his statement and said: "We were told that we were going to be attacked, that is why I accepted to go and locate supplies".

This imprudent disclosure led me to suspect that indeed the genocide had a network of relays on local levels. Eye witnesses in Gahunduguru said that the Burgomaster had followed the unsuspecting refugees on their route to the carnage so as to ensure that they were all killed. When he arrived at the place of the carnage, he asked the killers to remove the bodies to allow him to drive through the corpses. He went 1 km to the trade centre where he drank a beer, and drove back through the bodies again to return to the commune's headquarters leaving the corpses strewn on the road.

The next morning the former Burgomaster, then head of the MRND in the Birambo sous-prefecture, presided at the digging of common graves and the disposal of the bodies. On that Sunday, 17 April 1994, I again joined Pastor Simurabiye in the Musongati Pentecost Church and cried out in revolt and revulsion against the killers before a diminished congregation of 15 to 20 people. But then in my despair I questioned what can a committed community of rural boys and girls do other than say prayers? At that moment, we were as dead bodies sitting there, trapped in a hopeless situation. According to witnesses, the simulacra of the attacks of the commune and the trade centres were organised to involve more people in the killings and to ensure solidarity in crime. There was nothing I could do I told myself, but tell the Burgomaster the truth. The last time I met Mr. Muragizi, the burgomaster, 18th of April, I asked him if he thought that in "killing innocent defenceless people you could win the war; or resuscitate your shobuja (patron)"¹⁹.

The obvious role of the local authorities in encouraging the massacres were confirmed to us during an attempt to go into exile on April 25th near the Bwakira commune. There we were rescued from a mob, not by policemen nor any other commune functionaries who gazed indifferently at the scene of our plight, but by a widow. A Church member like us at Kigali parish, she came running up from a long distance crying loudly: "Uwo ni Gatwa wacu, ntimumwice" (this is our Gatwa don't kill him). Having split into partisans and opponents to decide our fate, they did not kill us but took our car leaving us abandoned at the side of the road. Eventually we negotiated the cost of our freedom not knowing what was going to happen to the car or to us next.

Genocide Massacres in Kaduha, Kibuye and Kirinda

Witnesses in the Gahunduguru centre saw two army jeeps on Tuesday 19 April 1994, conveying armed gendarmes towards the Kaduha Centre in Gikongoro, 30 miles away. It is believed that these people carried out the bombings of more than 14000 people which took place on the 20 and 21 April in the surrounding areas including the Mwendo commune. Witnesses who arrived from Kigali, via the Nyange centre in the middle of April told us how the Roman Catholic Church had been razed to the ground with 3000 to 4,000 people inside by a caterpillar engine hired by a local trader and the authorities of the Kivumu commune. Similar killings happened in the Gatwaro stadium in Kibuye prefecture where, according to witnesses almost 15000 people were killed under the order of the Prefet, Dr Kayishema. In the Kizenga hills at the Rwamatamu commune, about 10,000 refugees resisted for two days, having taken shelter with their cattle. The resistance was broken by supplies of Interahamwe convoyed in three lorries from the Bugarama and Cyangugu regions as witnessed²⁰.

¹⁹ Using the word Shobuja, I was refering to the death of President Habyarimana, whom the killers pretended to avenge. I then anticipated the worst and began to arrange my escape from the commune for my exile. I later learnt from credible sources that he regretted that 'such an accomplice' had escaped to safety.

²⁰ Witness, Ks.9, April 1994.

In Kirinda, the killings were conducted by the Sous-Prefet, the Burgomaster, the President of the Tribunal and the local gendarmes. On 14 April 1994 these authorities simulated an attack against the Bwakira Commune. They mobilised youngsters, piled them into a lorry belonging to the roads department and took them in convoy allegedly to defend the commune. Halfway they turned around and started the attack against the refugees in Kirinda at the Hospital and School of Nursing located at Shyembe centre. Many Church workers including medical and paramedical, teachers and ministers' families were all exterminated. These authorities rented lorries from the centre to load the corpses to bring them to the river Nyabarongo nearby. The authorities however did not leave Shyembe until 2. a.m. after finishing their 'job'. Two days later the Sous-Prefet, Anaclet Rudakubana, was promoted by the interim government as Prefet of Kibungo, a position he was never to occupy²¹.

The following days, the Burgomaster of Bwakira would sent militia to the Gitarama prefecture to the Masango and Murama Communes and up to the Adventist mission of Gitwe to hunt the Batutsi. The victims were brought hands tied behind them, seated on an embankment of the Nyabarongo bridge, then asked in which order they wanted to be hacked²².

Call for the Final Solution

Massacres in Butare: Breakdown of True Solidarity

In Butare, the massacres started after the visit of the interim President, Theodore Sindikubwabo. A native of the region, he made a visit and gave two public speech as on 19 April and again on 25 April. He blamed the authorities for not being 'concerned'. He publicly said : "abana b'abatutsi bagiye kwiga imbunda none baraturasa. None abantu bamwe baravuga ngo ntibindeba"²³. Until then the authorities in Butare, the Prefet and the Military Commander, had co-operated with the population to prevent the occurrence of the massacres. But then, the Prefet was dismissed and killed together with his entire family whilst the military commander was displaced. From that time onwards the massacres were systematically conducted by the Presidential Guards and the militia who were taken there in convoy by buses and military lorries from Kigali²⁴.

Massacres in Cyangugu:

Illusion of an International Solidarity

In Cyangugu, local clergy met in the Gihundwe Mission told how the massacres started in the Kibogora Methodist centre. The massacres began on Sunday, the 10th of April in the Kibogora region which contains a Methodist parish, a large hospital and schools for nurses and teachers. A meeting for 'security' was called by the Burgomaster. The meeting turned out

²¹ The appointment of the former Sous-Prefet of Birambo, A. Rudakubana as Prefet of Kibungo was announced by the Radio Rwanda station. Ironically, the day he moved to take over the office, the RPF took control of the area. (Tm.19).

²² Ns.13, witness in April 1994

²³ Our translation: "the children of the Batutsi have been training in fire arms and are shooting at us. Now, some people are saying: I am not concerned".

²⁴ Degni-Segui, R., Rapporteur of the UN Human Rights Commission. Report to the Economic and Social Council. Document E/CN.4/1995/70 of 11 November 1994, p.4.

to be a mass murder strategy. The Interahamwe blocked the roads, trapping and killing hundreds of people on their way back from the Church. The militiamen entered the hospital and took sick people from wards. Some tried to escape but were assassinated by the killers in the compound surrounding the hospital.²⁵

In their own compound, in Gihundwe, three refugees were shot dead in front of the Moderator of the Church by gendarmes who were threatening to expel almost 2000 refugees from the first Swedish missionary station founded in 1941²⁶. Eventually the Church leaders obtained permission for the refugees to be transferred to the Kamarampaka stadium where it was assumed they would receive better protection.

The killers were so determined to exterminate their targets that they would execute them at sacred sites by bombing or razing buildings to the ground, or pulling them from under the protection of key personalities and communities. When the Catholic bishop of Cyangugu tried to rescue three clergymen from Nyamasheke Parish and Secondary school, the refugees were pulled out of his car at Kagano Commune and hacked to death in front of the bishop²⁷. At the prefecture 'security meeting', the clergy present later reported that the Sous-Prefet of the area asked for a digger to dig the mass graves. As there was no engineer available, the Commune paid 200,000 Fr. to the criminals to bury thousands of the victims²⁸.

In Cyangugu, the genocide will also be remembered for two other reasons. First, because the international community failed to rescue the victims. Following the onset of the massacres, refugees gathered at the Kamarampaka²⁹ stadium from the Gihundwe Pentecostal parish, the Catholic diocese headquarters and elsewhere allegedly for 'sure protection'. Instead of protection, the militia would come to select victims to be slaughtered. For instance, on 29 April, 80 people were killed near the Kamembe market in a place renamed *Kinihira*³⁰ whilst several others were killed in a ravine called Mukadasomwa.

A tragic incident among many others happened the day after P. Gaillard³¹ head of the Red Cross in Rwanda, had created the illusion of an international solidarity. P.Gaillard announced on RFI that an agreement with the prefecture authorities for the transfer of the refugees to the Congolese (ex-Zaire) city of Bukavu, two miles away was imminent. The negotiations failed.

²⁵ Kg.9 & Nj.14., Cyangugu, April 28 1994.

²⁶ Kg.9 & Nj.14. Cyangugu, April 28, 1994.

²⁷ Mgr T. Ntuhinyurwa has, since the end of the war been appointed Archbishop of Kigali, Primate of the Catholic Church in Rwanda.

²⁸ Kg. 9 & Nj.14. Cyangugu, April 28,1994

²⁹ The referendum of September 1961 together with the legislative elections which ended the monarchical regime have been since known as Kamarampaka (which means the end of dispute). The stadium was famous not only for its historical name, but for the pressure to contribute financially and manually put on the population by the then Prefet, the zealous A. Kagimbababo. This man was also known for his mobilisation tactics during the 1959 revolution (Np.15). This memorial stadium is one of a dozen built with the population's labour and financial contributions during the era of glorified achievements of the MRND. It was located in a remote hill in the Cyangugu prefecture's headquarters, opposite the Congolese city of Bukavu.

³⁰ The place of slaughter near the public market of Kamembe was *renamed* *Kinihira* to cynically indicate that the victims were being sent 'home' to *Kinihira*, the RPF strongholds in the north of the country, in Byumba Prefecture.

³¹ The only leader of a Humanitarian Organisation who had decided to remain in Rwanda and to pursue his activities during the tragic events.

According to various sources confirmed by the UN Special Reporter³², the Prefet was under pressure by from his superiors who urged him to apply the 'final solution'. Thus the refugees remained in the stadium subject to death³³.

Second, the massacres were a demonstration of the absence of courage and of a clear strategy among the Christian leaders to stand for human rights and to save lives. According to credible sources, the Muslims, in Cyangugu protected their residential area called "la Cité" and mobilised members of their community whatever political parties they belonged to for their mutual protection. At the same time, Christian leaders requested the authorities of the interim government to take the refugees onto the Kamarampaka stadium rather than resisting with them, eventually up to martyrdom.

Due to the insistence of the Red Cross, about one thousand survivors were transferred to the Nyarushishi tea plantation. Credible sources from among people native to or familiar with Cyangugu estimated that there were no more than 4000 Batutsi survivors of the whole Cyangugu prefecture at the time. If only pressure on the interim government had accompanied the efforts of the Red Cross, the 5000 refugees could have been transferred to Bukavu, two miles away. Surprisingly, when the French "Turquoise operation" arrived, it took only a few days to rescue thousands of the genocide bureaucrats, militia and army from hundreds of miles away. In the row over justification of their controversial mission, the French advanced a fanciful figure of 10,000 Batutsi allegedly rescued in the Nyarushishi (Braeckman, Verschave). Although we thank God for even a single life saved (and many people thanked France for that), the figures have been obviously put forward to exorcise France's bad conscience from its previous role in recruiting, training, equipping and rescuing the genocidal regime as shown in chapter Six.

A Cry for Help to the World-wide Church

On the 13 April 1994, the present author had a two hour communication with the United Evangelical Mission in Wuppertal (VEM)³⁴, describing the occurrence of the massacres as a carefully long-time organised plan from the MRND/CDR regime to exterminate the Batutsi and the political opposition. Although it pursued the line of the previous letter of information on the political crisis he regularly produced from 1991 to inform the ecumenical bodies and friends abroad, that communication had a special character due to the tragedy and the circumstances of the call. Sent by telephone from a remote village, the intention was to alert

³² Degni-Segui., op.cit., p. 4.

³³ The announcement of the deal was made on Radio France International, on 28 April 1994. But nothing came out of these negotiations. When on 30 April the refugees were told to return to their homes some sources say the refugees then tried to cross the border to Zaire prompting the militia posted around the stadium and the roads to shoot indiscriminately leaving several hundred dead. Others were taken back to the stadium. Out of the 5123, almost 1000 survivors were transferred to the Nyarushishi tea plantation. Senior district functionaries including a Magistrate at the Appeal Court met in Cyangugu and a local Telecommunications engineer estimated the Cyangugu victims between 40,000 to 50,000. Witness., Hg.9. and B.a.1, April 1994).

³⁴ The message was recorded by Peter Sandner in French, translated into German and English and sent to ecumenical partners and Church members with some delay.

the ecumenical family to the gravity of the tragedy with the hope of raising a campaign of solidarity with the victims. It also deepened his isolation as he was labelled as 'icyitso' (accomplice).

The message started by describing the events as "Horror, carnage, political and ethnic cleansing which had no equivalent despite the tragic history of Rwanda

The superlatives, I said, would not present the situation in Rwanda as it was happening. The systematic killings are being conducted by the military unit of the Presidential Guard, the Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi militia against the Batutsi and among leaders and adherents of the moderate opposition imprisoned in their houses. The holocaust has been a carefully prepared response by the hard-line regime of the dictatorship to the crisis resulting from its incapacity to integrate the problems of democracy and to resolve the October 1990 war. The Church has tried to mediate between the different forces but without a clear position against the political blockage, it was criticised by the opposition for not being neutral³⁵.

The author also referred to the interconnection between the situation in Zaire, Burundi and Rwanda where the democratic process had been sabotaged by violence perpetrated by violent groups organised by the regimes. When he escaped from Rwanda with his family at the beginning of May 1994, the VEM was supportive and accepted to finance this research and my wife's Master in Health Management in the hope that we will be able to contribute to the healing of Rwandan society.

Church Leaders: Genocide or "Inter-ethnic killings"?

It must be acknowledged however that such a perception of the causes and the interpretation of the events as described above was not shared by some Christian leaders. In fact, during the first days of the massacres, a curfew was imposed on the whole country and sources of information were dominated by the hard-liners. However, in late April and May, Catholic and Protestant Church leaders met and published messages in which they failed to identify the criminals and to advocate in favour of the victims. Like the sensationalist media, some Church leaders have described the tragedy as the Bahutu revenging their "beloved" dead President, or killing first to prevent being killed. This judgement proceeded from their imprisonment in an ivory tower of "ethnic identity" that prevented them from discerning the instrumentalisation of difference, the manipulation of fears and frustrations by the state bureaucracy.

On the 21 April 1994 a communiqué from the Province of the Episcopal Church (Anglican) said that the bishops shared in the "suffering with those who lost their relatives, in particular the two Presidential families, Rwandan and Burundian, and the Prime Minister". "Sadly affected by the blood that flows continuously following the 'inter-ethnic-violence'" the bishops appealed to the RPF and the 'government' to cease violence, to agree with one another and to pardon mutually. They asked the United Nations and Church Organisations including the World Council of Churches, the All Africa Conference of Churches and Canterbury to mediate between the two parties.

³⁵ The report was sent to Wuppertal/ Germany from my remote native rural area of Biguhu, 150 miles from Kigali; it was recorded by Peter Sandner in French on April, 13 1994. In fact, from early 1990 the United Evangelical Mission in Wuppertal has been preoccupied with the deterioration of the political situation in Francophone Africa. Details of its initiative are recounted in chapter VI of this work.

On 5th May 1994, a month after the beginning of the massacres, the General Secretary of the Protestant Council in Rwanda, read on the interim government owned 'Radio Rwanda, a message on the behalf of the chairman of the Council. According to it, the massacres resulted from the death of the President. He then appealed to the RPF to renounce fighting and to negotiate with the Rwandan government. To the latter, he asked to guarantee security to each national. He publicly supported the Rwandan army and invited Christians to back the government.

The message of the Catholic bishops on the 13 May 1994 equally sent condolences to the victims and called on the RPF and the government to set up the institutions of transition. On 13 May 1994 the 'Committee of Contacts' of both Catholics and Protestants spoke to "those threatened by the negative consequences of the war and the massacres". They naturally condemned the profanities and the destruction of the holy instruments- instruments of liturgy- and places. They demanded the RPF and the government to cease the war and to stop the massacres; they offered their mediation but failed to condemn the genocide.

The Anglican archbishop of Rwanda, in a message to the UN General Secretary, condemned energetically the October 1990 war as unjustifiable. He lamented the infringement of the principle that prevents refugees attacking their country of origin and the host countries to give them a "base for subversive activities". If the UN had committed itself to democracy in South Africa, the controversial prelate suggested that UN must do the same in Rwanda where the attackers (the RPF) threaten to reinstate a monarchical regime rejected by the majority in 1960. The UN should stop the "war, in particular, the aggressor" and safeguard the rights of the majority and possibly of a 'certain group'³⁶, he wrote. Several other messages from individual bishops and Church leaders came with the same tone. They refused to see the genocide enterprise behind the actions of the interim government; and never identified the demon to condemn so that the world-wide Christian family could know through a credible source what was happening³⁷.

³⁶ The message was undated, but possibly written during the Archbishop's trip to Europe, North America. The trip was open on June 2 in a Press Conference in Nairobi to lobby for the interim government. During the Press Conference, the bishop refused to condemn the perpetrators of the massacres, the interim Government, its army and militia Interahamwe while sending the responsibility of the war to the RPF. Then most of the journalists attending walked out of the hall.

The bishop's message subsequent to this event was signed on each of its 14 paragraphs, referring to the April 1994 Anglican bishops declaration on the massacres. Apparently unsatisfied with the 'moderation' of the latter message, the bishop decided to issue his unfailing support to the regime and to speak out in favour of the 'rights of the majority'.

³⁷ The message from the head of a major Protestant Church called the events the "finale of Rwanda" and argued implicitly that the FPR and the opposition were responsible for the assassination of the Hutu opposition leaders during the period prior to the tragedy". As such the RPF and the opposition were held responsible of the blockage in the implementation of the Accord. The massacres were justified as the anger of the population and the presidential guard in revenge for the death of the president and to stop the RPF plan "to exterminate all the Bahutu leaders in the four days following the death of the president" (Tm.19).

Another bishop published a similar message, saying that, instead of 600 soldiers, the RPF had 5000 hidden in the Batutsi families in Kigali awaiting for the "J' day to take the arms from various caches around the country. The Bahutu community attacked the Batutsi after the death of the president to kill them, thus to annihilate the RPF and the Batutsi minority plan"(Kn.10)

Many among the clergy and other neutral observers who experienced the massacres recognised that there was no such a reality as 'inter-ethnic killings'. There was rather, on the one side, a strict state organisation, mobilising the population and supplying in arms and army and gendarmerie men, and on the other hand, the victims led like sheep to the slaughter. Speaking of the same massacres, Father Maindron of the Crete - Zaire-Nil parish wrote in his diary 15,16 et 17 April 1994:

Ce n'est pas une guerre civile, car la plupart de ces gens sont sans défense. On les tue comme des agneaux à l'abattoir... on veut éliminer tout ce qui est Tutsi. On est allé jusqu'à extraire l'embryon d'une femme Hutue (sic), mariée à un Tutsi, pour l'éliminer. Quel acharnement diabolique.³⁸

The reporter of the UN Commission on human rights reported the tragedy in similar terms:

The massacres are systematic in nature- whole families are exterminated- grand parents, parents and children. No one escapes, not even new-born babies. But what is even more symptomatic is that the victims are pursued to their very last refuge and killed there. This is true of ecclesiastical buildings, particularly Churches, which once served as a refuge for the Tutsi, but have now become the scene of their holocaust. The same applies to hiding places in the roofs or other corners of houses and in the woods and forests, to which the attackers set fire to make sure that they leave no survivors behind them. The same applies also to the frontiers, which are blocked to prevent the Tutsi from escaping to neighbouring countries³⁹

African Rights which interviewed and recorded several witnesses of what it called the "genocide and mass murder recounted by the survivors of the most horrific episode of modern history" arrived at a similar observation. Death squad groups and militia, the bureaucrats on different levels from the interim government by Prefets, Deputy-Prefets, Burgomasters and councillors have themselves conducted killings. African Rights then describes the motivation of these killers as follows:

They lamented the unfinished revolution of 1959-62: mass graves, rotting corpses, latrines, windows... bear testimony to the killers' determination to kill- and to kill the belief of the Rwandese people that the Church can protect innocent. They killed Church people, priests, nuns, medical staff, expecting women, children, elderly; they raped and killed women, all with *inhuman* cruelty. They deliberately secularised the Church, attacking the moral and spiritual fabric of the community. The aim was to annihilate.⁴⁰

The aim of the extremists was not only to physically exterminate every Rwandan from Batutsi background, but to create a nation of people complicit in the genocide killing, where everyone was tainted with the blood of those who had died, a permanent social and psychological no-man's land between Bahutu and Batutsi⁴¹. Among those who experienced these threats and couldn't offer protection to victims was Father Maindron. Powerless in the face of the suffering of the victims, he recounts how often he retreated in prayer.

Il (Maindron) se sent plus utile en priant qu'en assistant, impuissant, a la scène. Une décision prise d'instinct: ne pas y aller, ne pas voir mais prier. Il commence son chapelet et entend les coups de gourdins sur les têtes, puis les cris de douleur et une femme qui supplie: 'pitié, pitié'... Les adultes crient, les enfants meurent en silence. Le prêtre se met à genoux dans son bureau, les bras en croix. Il pense à la passion, à Maire lors de la mise en croix de Jésus.⁴²

To sum up, the genocide as we experienced it in the few examples reported here was organised by the political and military machinery of the state. Despite the courage of individuals which has not been researched, the moral and spiritual power of the Church has

³⁸ Poincaré, N., Gabriel Maindron. Un Prêtre dans la Tragédie, Paris: les éditions de l'atelier/ Editions ouvrières, 1995, p.99.

³⁹ Dégni-Ségui, R., Report E/CN.4/1995/7 of 28 June 1994 to the Economic and Social Council, New York, p.8.

⁴⁰ African Rights, 1994 p. 485.

⁴¹ Ibid. p. 568.

⁴² Poincaré, N., *op.cit.* p.88.

been damaged due to the absence of courage of the Church leaders to stand for the truth, and eventually to share in suffering with the victims. Why did many Christian communities lack examples and guidance on how to interpret the events with discernment so as to fight the evil?

The Church hierarchies' messages left the audience with a number of unanswered questions. As a team of Catholic and Protestant leaders why couldn't they join forces, to exert moral and psychological pressure on the interim government which was conducting the massacres. Why did they remain reluctant to name and condemn the killers? How much did their interpretation of the events rely on the prism of their ethnic belonging? Whether a firm condemnation of the killers would have made of the Church leaders martyrs is not absolutely evident; that it would have increased the credibility of the Church is unquestionable.

These questions and accounts of a personal experience raise a number of issues some of which will be dealt with in the thesis. Firstly, the suffering inflicted by human beings to their fellows indicates that people blinded by ideologies can be cynical beyond human imagination. Secondly, ideological manipulation which exacerbated people's resentment has a historical roots in the politics of modern Rwanda. Thirdly, the blindness affected both the elite and the masses. The former would defend the groups' interests with all kinds of means including the manipulation and the mobilisation for the solidarity in crime while the latter, ignorant and fearful, executed the orders from the authorities without questioning their basic foundation. Fourth, the international community headed by the leaders of the so-called free and "civilised nations" and the United Nations showed cowardice when it failed, one, to provide the moral guidance, two to stand for what they affirm is in the heart of contemporary civilisation, peace and democracy; they then pulled out their troops leaving defenceless civilians being slaughtered in what was already known as a carefully planned massive murder.

Hence the accounts highlight the necessity, if Rwanda society must be healed, for its elite, to go beyond the surface and reinvent the mechanisms for truth searching and telling, instead of enclosing mentalities in the fatalism and the inevitability of the conflicts. This is why this writer has been persuaded on the necessity to inquire on the sources, the factors and processes of these awful acts.

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1900's Christianity has become a new factor in Rwandan society. The research upon which this thesis, "Churches and Ethnic Ideology in the Rwandan Crises", is based, investigates the role Christianity played in the elaboration and development of the racial ideology that culminated in the 1994 genocide. It has been assumed that the genocide and massacres during which more than a million of human beings were killed resulted from the 'Hutu Power' ideology of the 'akazu' group, the entourage of Habyarimana (1937-1994).

The perspective of this paper acknowledges the reality of the 'Hutu- Power group' but then identifies new lines of reasoning perceiving the root causes of the conflict from three angles. Firstly, from the 1880's Rwanda was subjected to external influences which contributed to the construction of a meta-narrative founded on the Hamite myth defending the 'Batutsi supremacy'. Secondly, these meta-narratives built up the so-called 'race' differences which were systematised and erected into policy of discrimination. Thirdly, the local elite comprised of the traditional Batutsi nobility, followed later by the educated and then the post-independence Bahutu ethno-politicians assimilated the constructs.

Though the Banyarwanda people had many common factors, the encounter between the west and Rwandan society happened during a period of unveiling tendencies among some of the Rwandan internal dynamics and lineages forces competing to monopolise the power and resources. Then started a period of conceptions and misconceptions of society which basically, through the new theories of Hamite supremacy, reshaped society on a model of hierarchical stratification. This thesis has argued that the difference between the Banyarwanda, either physical, cultural, social, historical or biological have not been in any case proved. Hence it seems correct to say that the obsession of categorising the Banyarwanda into different races, pursued an ideological end in the sense Marxists, Mannheim and Dumont understand it.

This monopoly was granted in a process of mechanical hypocrisy, a deliberate manipulation of peoples' feelings and identities. In fact, the tendency for an elite to emerge from a social class and lineages so as to dominate was corroborated by the given images, stereotypes and prejudices, narratives and mythico-history recounted on and about the Banyarwanda people. These population who belonged to a same culture and civilisation started to be ascribed into ethnic and racial boundaries, what F. Barth considers as an obsession of the colonisers. From then on, the ideology has been

expressed into practical actions through discrimination in education, evangelism, politics or other sectors: the privileges were given to a selected elite on the detriment of the rest of the population. This created the *history resentment*, a kind of ideology of protestation. It seems that this has been the cause of the 1959 revolution and the root cause of further crises. An ideology of protestation against the false consciousness of Hamite supremacy from the late 1950s. This ideology of the rule of the majority, *Rubanda Nyamwinshi*, would justify its claims on the monopoly of power with the same weapons utilised by the colonial rulers and the conservative Batutsi: past injustices or the theories like “the Batutsi, foreign conquerors”. The defenders of this ‘Rubanda Nyamwinshi’ ideology have created loud-speakers and political, cultural and violent infrastructures to spread it: political parties, violent groups, media of hatred. From the perspective of the above analysis which is reflected in this thesis, ethnicity as ideology has been an interactive process between the western agents and the local elites.

However, the emergence of ethnic ideology in the interlacustrine region cannot be separated from the conception and misconception of African societies by the early explorers, reporters and travellers and ethnologists. These people produced accounts which betray a systematic search for the confirmation of fixed ideas on race supremacy of which the Hamite theory prevalent at the time among the Orientalists and Biblical exegetes would appear to be a key factor. The Colonial and Church agents arrived in the new field of expansion at the same time as Europe was clarifying a theory of race supremacy; inevitably they tended to perceive the population through such a prism. Hence most of the new institutions including schools and administration centres would reflect these ideas. The leading figures in the evangelisation of Africa, Cardinal Lavigerie, Mgr Classe and Revd Johanssen believed that for Christianity to be stable, it would first have to be adopted by the authorities and the 'dominant race'. Thus, the identifying of superior and inferior races became a real obsession of the missionaries.

In fact, the Banyarwanda people, the group whom the explorers and then the missionaries encountered, were distributed into three social categories: the Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa. These people had been living relatively peacefully together sharing many common factors including: cultural unity, language, religion, major social organisations like the clan and family customs such as intermarriage. Some lineages were, however, attempting to create their own identity. Out of that encounter between the West and Rwandan society, the image of Rwanda most persistently projected was of a land dominated by a 'race' of "Hamites of Caucasian origin who arrived in Rwanda from Ethiopia or Egypt. The 'Batutsi' were chosen

by the new rulers, colonialists and the missionaries to promote "a Civilisation founded on Christianity". The other groups, the Bahutu and Batwa constituted the mass of 'roturiers' relegated to a status of a second class citizens. Discriminatory policies were set up in cultural and political practices to reinforce the so-called differences in schools, in evangelism and in the public sphere. An ethnic ideology, this thesis argues, emerged out of that meta-narrative. From the beginning of evangelisation, Christian missions reshaped societies according to the doctrine of racial and ethnic supremacy with its rules, rituals, conversion, alliances and allegiances. Like the colonial rulers and taking for its pretext the existing inclination to the control of power by the royal lineages in the central core Kingdom, the missionaries would select among the population, those considered of Hamite origin, namely the 'Batutsi' and gave them all the privileges. At the same time, the other groups, the Bahutu (categorised as Bantu) and the Batwa (as pygmies) were driven out to the periphery. This process created a history of resentment which culminated in the 1959 revolution.

The emancipation in the colonies which occurred in the 1940s/50s brought the victims of that discrimination to stand against this Hamite supremacy. The conservative ruling class, entrenched in their feelings and beliefs of supremacy, clashed with those petitioning for more justice and equity. Surprisingly, the former defenders of the Hamite theory, the colonial rulers and the Catholic Church, converted to the Bahutu cause. These combined actions generated the 1959 social revolution which initiated the Bahutu rule and at the same time, left Rwandan society even more fractured.

A new ideology claiming the "rule of the indigenous majority" versus the "Ideology of Hamitic Supremacy" was born. Subsequently, the shadow of the Hamite myth blocked any chance of healing the wounds. There was a real need to bring about reconciliation. But in both cases, before and after independence, the intervention of the Church hierarchy as in the mediation in the 1990's crises, seems to have been an attempt to safeguard the triumph of the "Christian Kingdom in the heart of Africa". The Church hierarchy over many years had pursued a model of Church-State relationships legitimising the ideological world-view of the MRND system.

This research, to a great extent, seeks to investigate how these theories were planted and how they affected Rwandan Christianity. Firstly, it will identify the relationships that existed between the Banyarwanda people at the eve of colonial and missionary domination. Was Rwanda a society which promoted, harmony and equal opportunity for all? Secondly, what was the role of the early explorers, the colonial and missionary agents in recounting, describing, conceiving and misconceiving this society? Thirdly, to what extent did the local elite participate in the ethnising of society?

A Socio-historical grounded Research

In the 1920s and 1930s the monarch and the ruling class converted to Catholicism followed by the masses. Rwanda was consecrated to Christ the King and to the Virgin Mary. During the same period the Protestant missions were experiencing the Spiritual Revival which started in Gahini in 1930s, a station of Church Missionary Society- Rwanda Mission. Was it a real achievement of "the Christian Kingdom in the heart of Africa" or an excessive triumph which blinded Christian leaders and prevented them from foreseeing the negative consequences of their collusion with an unjust political system?

In the post-independence period, under the guise of a search for pragmatism and realism in economic and social development in collaboration with the administration of Kayibanda (1961-1973) and subsequently under Habyarimana (1973-1994), the Churches subscribed unquestionably to the government's policies. In many instances those practices were oriented toward the reactivating of the memory of the myth of supremacy for partisan interests while at the same time, totally ignored the refugee issue and the necessary pursuit of political reconciliation.

The Churches went as far as the Roman Catholic Church becoming the greatest sponsor of the PARMEHUTU regime of Gregoire Kayibanda, then both the Catholics and Protestants began to participate in the legitimisation of the Habyarimana regime (1973-1994). The Church hierarchies accepted to be enrolled into the new MRND system; they participated in the creation and shaping of the images of an acceptable regime at home and abroad. At the time, Human rights were abused to a considerable degree, the Churches issued no single word of criticism of the regime nor did they warn the public opinion of that reality.

This legitimising was made up with many metaphors, rituals and allegiances borrowed from other post-independence dictatorial regimes like Zaïre and Togo as well as the communist regimes, in particular, that of North Korea under Kim-Il-Sung. A large section of the media participated in the promotion of the politics of victimisation and scape-goating of a section of the population, spreading the ideology of the 'Rubanda Nyamwinshi' (majority: a metaphor for the Bahutu) supremacy and rule, denying any form of participation and rights to the Batutsi.

It took five decades for the dehumanising colonial rule to defect; and it took three decades for the post-independent dictatorial regime of Habyarimana to collapse. Whether the Churches would have adopted a different attitude if they were aware of the catastrophic consequences of the ideologies perpetrated by both the colonial and post-independence systems, is beyond the scope of this work.

From an ethical point of view, the attempts of the Churches to intervene in the 1950s and in the 1990s crises can be seen like a late, desperate rush to 'extinguish the fire' as one Church leader, Mgr.A.Ruhumuriza, once put it. Observers of the Churches in the last decades were left with a constant concern at the absence of any commitment to address burning issues while the morality of society was being eroded to a considerable degree. Was it because of

the appallingly inadequate leadership training or because of a Christianity enclosed in a political environment imbued with an ethnic agenda? There is, this writer suggests, a link between these two aspects.

A Practical Grounded Research

The 1994 tragedy has deepened the wounds in the three communities of the Batutsi, Bahutu and Batwa, though not to the same depth or extent. It raises the issue of whether there still exists the means and signs of hope for the rehabilitation of a social harmony which once existed. What is proposed in this research is to lead the Churches to reconsider seriously what Christian life is about and the reasons for their failure in raising the moral standards of society.

This research rests on some firm convictions. Firstly, the emergence of a human being on earth is primarily a divine act; then a historical reality. Its integrity rests on a spiritual, social, political and mutual interdependence of human beings. To restore a social harmony, a radical change of attitude is needed from all those who played a key role in the Rwandan conflict. And to become a true serving community, faithful to the Gospel, the Churches must confess their own guilt and repent. Only then the Churches, if they adopt a *Listening Ecclesiology*, can they be a true moral and mediating force in and between the various strata of society.

Secondly, the ethical and practical theology of the Church should converge on four fundamental values: Repentance, Forgiveness, Healing and Reconciliation. In the light of what we know of the crisis the Churches both in Rwanda and world-wide will not only confess and repent but, like the nation, face the reproaches and challenges from the victims and the survivors. To be able to accompany the survivors and others on the route of reconstruction and reconciliation, the Churches, ought to help society set up the mechanisms which could contain the anger, rancour, revenge or frustrations of the victims.

A Holistic Grounded Research

An introduction to both the research method and to the immediate political socio-historical and religious contexts within which this research was conducted has a value here. Firstly, the 1994 genocide and massacres have become an ethical issue for Christianity. The Churches have been accused of having either participated in the genocide itself or in the elaboration of the ideology that culminated in the tragedy. These accusations have been framed in general terms, mainly focusing on some individuals and rarely going beyond the period of the Habyarimana regime (1973-1994). The plethora of publications on the tragedy simply reproduce past stereotypes or state accusations without attempting any comparative analysis of the responsibility to be borne by the two main Christian families.

Secondly, the tragedy resulted from the consequences of the recent multivalent crises which broke out at the end of the 1980s. At that time the dictatorial regimes on the Africa continent were subjugated to pressure to accept political changes. In Rwanda, the pressure increased with the war started by the former refugees who attacked from Uganda on 1 October 1990. In

contrast to the Church hierarchies caught in the same embarrassment as the rulers, many individuals and grass-roots groups lobbied the Churches to speak out against injustices and to undertake mediation. These groups also started to educate people on human rights, democracy and reconciliation.

The present author was part of the lay groups lobby urging the Churches both to mediate and to reflect on the challenges and potential arising from the on-going socio-political changes. This involvement happened at various levels. Firstly a request was drafted by the Churches to the AACC and WCC to assist in organizing a meeting between the Government and the representatives of the refugees. This resulted in the first meeting for over 30 years between these two groups together with the Church leaders; the meeting took place in August 1991 in Nairobi. Secondly, the groups lobbied Church leaders to meet with the leaders of the newly formed political parties. A meeting took place in December 1991. These contacts were pursued between Church leaders, the party leaders and the Habyarimana regime. They led to the formation of a coalition Cabinet of five internal political parties so as to plan negotiations with the rebellion. The achievements and limitations of these initiatives are debated in Chapter six.

The idea of this research grew up as the author elaborated an outline of a working document and chaired a Presbyterian Church ad-hoc Commission appointed in 1991 and which produced a reflection on the burning issues ⁴³. It increased in February 1992 when the Protestant Council (CPR) Church leaders and staff met in the Gihindamuyaga Monastery to reflect on the CPR vis-à-vis the political changes and invited this writer to give an external assessment about the Council.

In the same line, in September/October 1993 I was appointed together with Bishop A. Birindabagabo of the Anglican Church and Rev. Mangolopa of the Baptist Church (CBK) in the Kivu (Rep.Dem. Congo) by an Ecumenical Consultation of the United Evangelical Mission partner Churches in Africa to draw up an outline of a series of seminars on Reconciliation, Human rights and Democracy for which the UEM was guaranteeing a substantial funding. In fact, while many Christians adopted the attitude of wait and see, the author was persuaded that only participation would help Christians to influence positively the ongoing changes. This explains his active role in the launching of reflections and rallies of Christian peace groups (Umukristo mu Majyambere; Duharanire Amahoro; AEE); and in the foundation of the Human rights organization (ADL) for which he carried out different tasks in monitoring and facilitating seminars.

There was a need to identify the causes of the 1990 to 1993 crises and to relate them to the effort made by the Church leaders and Christians in mediation. When the studies for an M.Th. in *Media and Theology* were envisioned, the initial plan was to write a dissertation

⁴³The group was created by the Synodal Council to assist the Church in reflecting on the political changes. It met for the first time in the Kibuye Guest House, Bethania, from 4 to 8 January 1992. The reflection was published in February 1992 under the title *Ukuri Kubaka Igihugu* (the truth that builds the country).

concentrating on what many considered as the "Crisis in Communication between the Church hierarchies and Society".

Then the genocide happened. The tragedy opened a whole frame of unsatisfactory reporting and publications on it. The few publications written by Christians such as the books of the Canadian Journalist, H. McCullum; L. Bilinda, C. Lawrence and A. Rutayisire testify to the personal sufferings and pain of the survivors⁴⁴; they have no ambition to present a socio-ethical or theological reflection. McCullum for example, recounts the tragedy and the role of Churches from the perspective of a journalistic report of the massacres which happened in many Church buildings.

The initial plan of the research was then expanded to allow a comparison between the historical, political developments with its mechanisms of ethnic crystallization and the ethics of the Churches. Consequently, the length of the period to cover was extended to 1900 -1994. Why such a wider period? In fact, firstly, most of the witnesses refer to the colonial and missionary era as the cradle of racial ideology; secondly, the 1990s crises relate in various ways to the preceding years of 1973, 1964 and 1959. This led the author to refer to the Rwandan context as the 'constellation of crises', meaning that before one crisis was contained, another had emerged out of the consequences of the precedent. In recalling this predicament, there is not, in his understanding, a slipping in fatalism. Rather, it is to emphasize the lack of political determination to resolve these crises which left a vacuum for a culture of violence to develop.

A research questionnaire was designed with the assistance of Professor Forrester, Dean of Faculty of Divinity, Dr J. Thompson of the Centre for Studies of Christianity in the Non-Western World, the Faculty of Divinity and Dr Robertson of the Social Science Policy Department of the University of Edinburgh. The frameworth of the questionnaire was suggested in order to conclude the thesis with concrete and practical actions to enable the Churches to become agents of reconciliation. The questionnaire would lead the interviewees to discuss the real causes of the tragedy; to discuss the priority of the Churches in the aftermath of the tragedy; and in the case where reconciliation was chosen as a priority, to identify personal and institutional concrete initiatives undertaken by the interviewee before and after the tragedy. The questionnaire was also designed to motivate a discussion on the signs of hope and the role of the Churches in the future.

Later, the questionnaire was adapted to include a discussion on the need and the response of the Churches to the call for repentance and the healing of memories. It was intended to invite the interviewees to discuss how the Churches should recover their ecclesial integrity and to be able to communicate truth in society. The field work was undertaken in Brussels and

⁴⁴ McCullum, H., *The Angels Have Left us, the Rwandan Tragedy and the Churches*, Geneva: WCC, 1995; Bilinda, L., *The Colour of Darkness, a Personal Story of Tragedy and Hope in Rwanda*, London: Stoughton & Hodder, 1996; Lawrence, C., *Rwanda, a Walk Through Darkness into Light*, Gresham: Vision House, 1995; and Rutayisire, A., *Faith Under Fire. Testimonies of Christian Bravery*, Herts: African Evangelistical Enterprise, 1996.

Wuppertal in June-July 1996; in London in August 1996; three visits took place to Rwanda in 1995 and 1997.

It had been agreed that the design of the questionnaire would facilitate a general discussion on the issues rather than a question-response procedure. This framework was helpful in the securing of consent for the interviews. In fact, some including scholars who have written extensively on Rwanda from the 1950s, opted to be referred to as an "interested person who made valuable remarks". One understands how the tragedy shamed people who had a closeness with the Rwandan reality. However, it is evident in chapter Seven, which is the most substantiated by the frame of the field work, that many other interviewees fully informed of the nature of the research did not object to being quoted. To a certain extent, interview and observation techniques were combined.

A 'Data Collection approach'

The research methodology employed by the thesis values a qualitative and quantitative collection of written material and discussion of various hypotheses. This was oriented to ensure the thesis was documented from both the primary theoretical sources such as the missionary and colonial material as well as the immediate witnesses from Colonial and the 1960-1964 periods. As commanding sources, the research uses the reports of the colonial administration of Ruanda-Urundi, in particular the years 1922-1932 and 1957-1961 as well as the missionary societies' reports. This first period was chosen to reflect what is known as the colonial reforms carried out particularly by Governors Morteau and Voisin (1924-1931). When using missionary sources, the commanding figures within the Catholic Church will be Mgr. Classe, Apostolic Vicar (1907-1945), and Father Kagame from the local clergy who started writing in the late 1930s. Among the Protestants, the key figure referred to is Dr Johanssen of the Bethel Mission.

In the course of the argumentation, three tendencies which have developed in the interpretation of Rwandan ethnicity have been identified. One, the Primordialist school which claims that ethnic rivalry existed among the Banyarwanda before colonization, two, the instrumentalist school which presents the colonial and missionary agents as the planters of ethnic ideology, and third, the 'indigenous tendency' or the attempt from the dominant lineages to strengthen a group identity in order to monopolize power and resources in the core kingdom. When debating the first tendency, the leading figure will be Jacques Maquet, and Luc de Heusch; in the second case, Prof. Filip Reyntjens, Lemarchand, Catherine Newbury and Claudine Vidal. In the last case, the major sources used are the writings of prominent ethnologist missionaries including Father Kagame. During the crucial period of ethnic mobilization in the military dictatorship, the leading figure is F. Nahimana and the RTLM radio and Kangura newspaper.

A "Participant Observation" Approach

The second method employed is "Participant Observation"⁴⁵ so as to document the discourse and to bring in complementary perspectives through observation and personal involvement. Much of the interest deepened gradually in the pre-genocide observations, involvement and questioning raised in seminars of human rights and reconciliation organized either by the associations of Human rights, the associations of journalists and some Church organizations. In the post-genocide era, the reflections deepened out of seminars and conferences in which the author participated either as facilitator such as the "Detmold Confession Group" in 1995, 1996 and 1997; the contribution to the publication of the Presbyterian Church book on the Memorial of the victims of the Genocide⁴⁶; the Contribution to Wereld in Zending 1998/1; the UEM Conference on Justice Peace and Creation in Kigali, September 1997; the December 1996 Symposium in Wiesbaden/ Germany on Religions and Politics in Africa; the Paper presented to the Research Forum and Consultation of the NAMP in Cambridge, April 1998; and not least, interviews and conversations given to media and parishes. All this inspired the substance of the work.

The "Participant Observation" approach led gradually to a reciprocal relationship both with Rwandans and expatriates which evolved at various occasions to 'hearing' meetings on the theme of this research. Either in meeting or in discussions few people would pretend to fully understand the real causes and motivations of the perpetrators of such an appalling evil. Some times the discussions ended in tears and veneration of the innocent victims of the horror, and in a burning desire to urge the Churches to repent for having underestimated or ignored the suffering of the victims.

The integration of interview, observation and participation was facilitated by the fact that many communication barriers were broken. In fact, the major language of communication in Rwanda is Kinyarwanda, the mother tongue of the writer, and in rare cases French and English which he claims to have some knowledge. Equally, the writer was acquainted with most of the vocabulary, local idioms, hyperboles and understatements⁴⁷ as well as some moral codes derived from Rwandan culture. More importantly, he has been eager for a long time to recount the experiences of suffering observed from my early age in various tragedies (1959, 1964, 1973, 1990's). However, it must be acknowledged that some disturbances appeared during the research. These include hesitations, self-accusations of hypocrisy which affect many Rwandans about what they did or could not do during the tragedy; or the traumas and bad souvenirs left by the tragedy on some of the interviewees.

⁴⁵ Paul, B., "Interview Techniques and field Relationships". In Kroeber, A., (Ed), Anthropology Today. An Encyclopedic Inventory, Chicago: Chicago University press, 1953, p.444/5 ff.

⁴⁶ Gatwa, T., "Les défis de l'église Aujourd'hui et Demain". In EPR, Mémorial des Victimes du Génocide de 1994, Kigali, 1998.

⁴⁷ Paul, B., op.cit. p. 448

In all cases, the writer found expedient to interview those people who have controlling voices and hold power hierarchy in the Churches⁴⁸ but also those who command respect in the ways they dealt with the crisis before, during or after the tragedies.

A Document Analysis Approach

The third method employed is "document analysis". A lot of conference, seminars, letters, media reporting, mission evaluations and books have been produced by people of various professions. All of them were not inspiring but it was necessary to deal with most of them (e.g. the messages of Church P. to the "President – Fondateur" of Rwanda Major-General Habyarimana from 1984 to 1993; the documents of the International Conference on Reconstruction after the periods of wars and conflicts, Kigali September 1994; the International Conference on Reconstruction and Reconciliation organized in la Haye by the European Council; the reports of different ecumenical bodies which visited the torn Rwanda, in particular, the WCC, AACC, LWF and different other individual missionary organizations; the pastorals of the Catholic bishops, from 1990 to 1994; the whole series of the *Umukristo mu Majyambere* publications on human rights and democracy; the documents and reports of Churches and Para-Church organizations before and after the tragedy. I have also analyzed the major issues dealt with by some Newspapers, in particular Kangura and Kinyamateka between 1990 and the early 1994 and a substantial amount of recorded programs of the RTLM and a range of reporting published in British, French, Belgian and American Newspapers.

Listening Ecclesiology

As the research progressed, certain "guiding principles" have been firmly sustained. Firstly, this writer arrived at the conviction to envision a healed and reconciled society where no one would be hurt or deprived of their rights, even life for being born Muhutu, Mututsi or Mutwa. Secondly, there seems to be a need for a critical and creative Christian community capable of relating the ethics of the Church to daily reality. For that reason, participating in different humanitarian activities at the grass-roots helped the author to understand the critical situation of Human rights abuse.

Stemming from these guiding principles, the perspective envisioned in this thesis aims at creating awareness around a *Listening Ecclesiology*. A Listening Ecclesiology is one which takes into consideration the experiences of the grass-roots, the poor and the victims of oppression. As the research progressed, it became reasonably possible to anticipate the feasibility of a Listening Ecclesiology in initiating "hearing discussions" with various groups on the causes of the crises including the survivors who recounted the stories of the tragedy and assessed the signs of hope for the future.

Likewise, the clergy (bishops included) should combine apostolic authority and teaching ecclesiology on one hand with listening to communities, and individual members through a

⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 431

genuine dialogue so as to give to the grass-roots significant attention and confidence to speak out the truth. In so doing they will educate a generation capable of challenging the monopoly of power in Churches and society so as to question orders instead of executing them blindly. This will break down the top to bottom culture of blind obedience where people have been subjugated to manipulation from the defenders of all kind of ideologies.

Secondly, if, as this author believes, a new beginning was inevitable, then a 'Listening Ecclesiology' will imply the companionship of the Churches of Rwanda by the universal Church through what Hélène and Jacques Küng called a "Friendship interference"⁴⁹. Churches both in the north and in the south should then adopt a "Friendship Interference Theology", that is an energetic mutual challenge model in which they listen to one another and share the responsibility for mission including repentance for past misconceptions of Rwandan society as a basic ethical issue.

Thirdly, a *Listening Ecclesiology* constitutes a pathway to a servant-hood ministry. It would lead the clergy to overcome conflicts of leadership which have discredited Christian communities. To put the end to the unpleasant experience of a style of the rulers among some Christian leaders, on the top and the congregations who follow blindly on the bottom, the listening ecclesiology combines the ecclesial authority with participation at the same time, acknowledges as Jesus did, that the greatest in the Kingdom of God must be like the youngest among us (Luke 22:22-26).

This may be a serious attack to those who traditionally have tendency to minimise the contribution from the oppressed, the marginalised and many others ignored. If the accent was put onto the increase of the chances of participation with the laity, if both the clergy and the laity were given the chance to empower each other, then the process can result in a servant-hood ministry which assists the communities and the individuals to recount the stories of the breakdown of social harmony so as to be healed.

Lastly, *Listening Ecclesiology* could help Churches to integrate a holistic approach to repentance in the teaching of the Churches. If the clergy was ready to accept confessing and repenting in the name of the community and individuals as did Nehemiah, Daniel and Jeremiah, then the process could facilitate the re-establishment of mutual communication between the members of the community. Accepting the responsibility to bear the pain of both the victims and the guilty fits in both Christian and Rwandan culture as the way forwards for reconciliation.

In the Prologue, in a personal experience this work recounts the human suffering and shows the state nature and organisation of the genocide. In **chapter one** it raises the issue of identity and ethnic ideology. It questions the Church leaders' misleading accounts and their

⁴⁹ Kung, J& H., " Il y a encore des Artisans de Paix au Rwanda". In *Perspective Missionnaire*, no 33, Lausanne, 1997.

failure to tell the world that the massacres were not 'inter-ethnic killings' but the instrumentalisation of 'ethnic' feelings and a 'genocide' organised by the state machinery.

The second chapter discusses the concept of ethnicity and its inappropriate application to the Banyarwanda people with regard to its anthropological definitions. The discussions concern how the image given to the Abanyarwanda by others as well as the tools of discrimination elaborated and implemented in the first half of this century created an 'ethnic' conscience.

Chapter Three enquires into three Christian missions, the Roman Catholic White Fathers, the Bethel Missions (Protestant from Germany) then the Church Missionary Society (Anglicans) and their respective role in eventually propagating an ethnic ideology. In fact, the research underlines the convergence between the Church and the colonial powers in promoting the Hamite myth among Rwandans and practising the discrimination which sealed the fateful destiny of Rwanda.

Chapter Four instead poses the issue of the Hamit myth kept alive in the aftermath of the 1959 uprisings. Here was the beginning of other forms of injustice coupled with violence against the Batutsi. Phrased differently, yesterday's oppressed became the oppressors of today. The monolithic regime with a state-party that emerged out of the Republican period was characterised by the divinisation of a ruler who manipulated the instruments of discrimination yet was still able to charm the international community. But why was not such a new phenomenon of the divinisation of the ruler isolated by the ecclesial hierarchies so as to prevent its impact on Church ecclesiologies?

Chapter Five, analyses the role of the media in spreading the ideology of hatred and genocide. The Churches had enormous access to both their own and the public media but then, why did they fail to enhance and to create a national conscience of fellowship among Rwandans around some programmes? Media, this thesis suggests, must be a genuine tool guided by strong ethical considerations safeguarding human dignity through *koinonia*.

Chapter Six then describes the determinants of the 1990 crises; the war, the deterioration of social and political conditions and then gives an account of the "Church mediation" in the 1990's crisis. The mediation is presented in a chronological arrangement and commented on with regard to its lack of ethical and theological perspective. In this regard, three case studies, the Episcopalian quarrels, the apparitions in the Kibeho Catholic parish, and the Mariamu and Bonnke teachings were assessed as a few of the factors that crippled the potential for authentic mediation.

Lastly, Chapter Seven assessed some outside Christian experience of similar tragedies, as in Germany, Ireland and South Africa. The insights gained from these contexts can help the Churches face courageously the issues of confession of guilt, repentance and forgiveness. One of the guiding principles of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa is helping people, both the victims and the perpetrators of violence to tell their story

publicly so that people know how they arrived at such a degraded state. TRC promotes the principles of the restorative justice (confession, repentance, reparation and amnesty) in opposition to the retributive (punitive) justice.

When this work refers to Banyarwanda, it means the three groups of population, the Bahutu (plural of Umuhutu), the Batutsi (plural of Umututsi), the Batwa (plural of Umutwa) who are united by the same culture, speak the same language, Kinyarwanda (the Kirundi is its variance in Burundi). For ease of pronunciation in foreign languages, a conventional spelling has been gradually adopted, Hutu in the place of Abahutu/Umuhutu, Tutsi in the place of Abatutsi/Umututsi and Twa in the place of Abatwa/Umutwa.

At the eve of the third millennium, Rwandan Christianity, approaching the centenary of existence has not been able to elaborate a coherent theological body of thought, other than a moralising and incoherent preaching. There is a feeling that through the diversity of their social services, including education, health institutions, rural development projects and media, the Churches can achieve what they have previously failed to do, to define the guidelines for imaginative theological thought; to create a ministry for human dignity and for the defence of fundamental liberties, to struggle against injustices and poverty. This has something to do with a Church that would offer a holistic approach to Christian ministry, interpreting the Bible to reinforce the unity of mankind liberated from all dehumanising practices. In proposing a Listening Ecclesiology based on a guiding principle, the healing of the Church and the nation, this thesis aims at face such a challenge.

Chapter I: IDENTITY AND ETHNICITY

The 1994 Rwandan genocide⁵⁰ has its roots in an ethnic ideology which has been exploited by the 'Hutu power' hard-liners of the Habyarimana regime. There have been at least two major trends in the interpretation of the causes of the tragedy; on the one hand, a tendency to blame the 'secular hatred' between the Bahutu and Batutsi and on the other hand, a judgement against the legacy of colonial policies. What is central, from the perspective of this thesis, is an analysis of the development of the racial ideology and the role played by Christianity. To this end the process started with the destruction of key factors of integration existing in Rwandan society prior to colonial and missionary activity in 1900 and the building up of ethnic identities that envisioned a new community in which the other is excluded, even physically eliminated.

In the following paragraphs we will consider ethnicity in the Rwandan context, or in our terms, Ethnicism, as an ethical issue that has had a dramatic impact on Christian Faith and Church witness. Secondly, the massacres have been interpreted as inter-ethnic killings. This interpretation, which this writer does not share, has been strongly sustained in different other tragic events for almost a hundred years. Thirdly, the thesis will investigate how external influences have affected both the factors of integration, and the construction of new narratives. Fourthly, the elimination of the Other reached its height in the genocide whose organisation by the state and party bureaucrats could be observed even at a very local level. The tragedy was not accurately recounted because both the national and the international community who controlled the means of communication had vested interests in hiding their direct legal, moral and diplomatic responsibility or their failure to stop the genocide.

I.1. Ethnicity as an Ethical issue

Speaking about Christian Ethics refers to how the Church's presence in society relates its mission to the social reality; to the problems of morality and to burning issues. To what extent do the teachings of the Church deal with the issues of guilt and evil within society as a whole? Christ's Church has been present in Rwanda from 1900 when the country was evangelised by the Roman Catholic White Fathers missionaries, joined in 1907 by the Protestant Missionaries from Bethel in Germany. Several other Protestant missions including the Anglicans of the Church Missionary Society from UK, the Seven Day Adventists from

⁵⁰ The genocide was confirmed by, Prof. Degni-Segui from Ivory Coast, the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights on Rwanda: "Eminent persons have not hesitated to describe the massacres of the Tutsi as genocide. It is necessary to confirm by reference to the facts that this term is appropriate". Degni- Segui, R., Report E/CN.4/1995/7 of 28/6/1994, New York: 1994, Paragraph 43.

Similarly, in his letter of 9 December 1994 to the President of the Security Council, Boutros Boutros Ghali, then General Secretary of ONU presenting the report of the Commission of experts on Rwanda said: "Il existe des preuves accablantes attestant que des actes de génocide ont été commis à l'encontre du groupe Tutsi par des éléments Hutus agissant de manière concertée, planifiée, systématique et méthodique, en violation de l'article II de la Convention de 1948 pour la prévention et la répression du crime du génocide". Boutros-Boutros Ghali., Lettre S/194/1405, New York: December 1994.

USA, two Baptist branches from Denmark and USA, and the Methodists from USA. Pentecostals from Sweden arrived between 1920 and early 1940s⁵¹.

The present study covers the 1900 to 1994 period during which the seeds of ethnic ideology grew its poisonous fruit. Ethics, to paraphrase Bonhoeffer, will engage us to speak about how Jesus Christ took form in the world (Rwanda, in this case) in concrete decisions, actions, commandments and instructions for which obedience is demanded. Churches face their first ethical responsibility with regard to the way they assumed the Lord's Great Commission of transforming all the nations into His disciples, the Great Commandment and the Golden rule, Love the Lord your God and Love your Neighbour as yourself. The idolisation of power and violence in society which is witnessed in this work is surely due to the absence of love and justice; in other words, the body of Christ was not manifested enough in the midst of Rwandan society. Consequently, the Church's teaching is under questioning as in many regards the attitudes of the clergy (including the hierarchy) have emphasised ethnic ideology. Ethnicity or the belonging to a particular group is not necessarily a negative factor. It is the manifestation of the diversity received as a gift from God to human beings. Ethnicity is always expressed through social and cultural diversities in a learned process. Through their ethnic group, "human beings enjoy their roots and values of reference". As M. Slattery points out, ethnicity is part of a system of identity which is concerned with the many categories contrived by the world to define or name others, class, gender, religions, tribes and clans.

The quest of identity has its roots in the search of self vis-à-vis the Other; it implies uniqueness, sameness and the Transcendent Other. This triple conception of identity is shaped by a world-view made of internal and external influences which form a process of socialisation⁵². This socialisation maps and informs our identity as a narrative providing the tools for our good relationships or hostility to others. It is informed by our memory, our relationship with the past, the present, the future, the place and the culture. This process is clearly discussed in relation to the manipulation by the extremist groups of the Rwandan 'mythico-history' to nurture the hostility against their enemies. As such, ethnicity is linked to self-image and image of others, of the world, our Divine Creator and His Creature's destiny.

In the present day, ethnicity is referred to as a manipulation of people's ethnic identity and cultural differences⁵³. However, recent historical developments in anthropological studies have shown that cultural identity and ethnic belonging have been the tools exploited by the holders of political and ideological systems who have no democratic ideal. In recent years ethnicity has lost its primary meaning, that is the manifestation of our cultural diversities, it

⁵¹ Gatwa, Th. & Karamaga, A., *Les Autres Chrétiens Rwandais. Présence Protestante*, Kigali: Urwego, 1990.

⁵² Slattery, M., *Issues of Identity: Churches in Northern Ireland and Rwanda*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 1996. Maureen argues that in both situations, Northern Ireland and Rwanda, the colonisers, the British in the first case and the Germans and then the Belgians as well as the Churches participated elaborated new narratives which support the theory of differences.

⁵³ Gorgendière, L. de., King, K. and Vaughan, S (ed.), *Ethnicity in Africa*, Edinburgh: Centre for African Studies, 1996.

has been more often used in relation to mobilisation and sectarianism. Many violent rulers who want to perpetuate their monopoly of power by violence would take a group's identity as a foundation of a patriotism and nationalism which exclude the others.

I.2. Ethnicity as Ideology

This thesis is not concerned with discussing the genesis of ideology. However, though scholars including Mannheim, A.Kee and others trace its historical development to antiquity from where it came to us as an intellectual and religious heritage⁵⁴, ideology has been associated to Marx and the 19th century and extended to any tendencies, ideas and thoughts of a given society, an epoch or group which dissent from those of the others. Mannheim detects three stages in the process of its forming. First, it started with the disintegration of intellectual unity, in a form of psychological, theoretical and non logical level without necessarily establishing a causal connection but the characteristics of the total situation⁵⁵. One refers to ideology when distrust of men toward man becomes explicit and methodologically recognised. That goes from simple lies to errors of psychological nature to questioning of visions and prophecies. However, it cannot be a mere calculated lies of an individual but when we regard their view as function of the social situation or group to which they belong to. Thus arises a "group ideology" which occurs in popular speech, creating psychic interactions and reactions of persons of that group conditioned by the same situation. Though independent experiences are important, its inner structure is not a mere integration of these experiences. A working class, for instance, does not experience all the elements of the proletarian outlook⁵⁶. In Rwanda, the "group ideology" has been promoted with different theories of justification, i.e. the Hamite supremacy or the "Rubanda Nyamwinshi", all promoted in cultural, political and social relations.

The second important historical development took place during the Renaissance in particular during and after the Napoleonian wars. A rising elite and bourgeoisie not content to fit in the old feudal system and in the imperial ambitions of Napoleon brought a new style of thought interpreting and explaining the world. Napoleon who was not happy with that group labelled them "ideologists". Napoleon was able to

⁵⁴ Mannheim, K., *Ideology and Utopia. An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, London: Kegan Paul, 1946. p.62.

⁵⁵ The Communist Manifesto quoted by David Guest, 1939, p.52.

⁵⁶ Mannheim, op.cit. p.52.

discredit his opponents showing that political speech often contains more philosophy and significance than academic disputes which rarely goes beyond the academic worlds⁵⁷. As indicated in chapter four, the political monolithism of both the colonial and post-independence eras in Africa, in particular, the totalitarian military regimes of recent decades has left the ground to a single “divine ruler”, the genius of the nation.

Thirdly, used by militant proletariat to unmask the hiding motives of its adversaries, Marxist’s conception of ideology is achieved by Marxist theory showing the role of class position or interests. In fact, for Marx and Engels understand ideology as a system of ideas and representations which, while giving the illusion of being autonomous is rather determined by the reality because it is related to humans who advocate it and produce socio-economical means of existence⁵⁸. In their presentation of the *German Ideology*, Marx and Engels suggest that the life of human beings is expressed in what they produce and how they produce to satisfy their basic needs. Such a process creates the first real cleavage in society between the oppressors and the oppressed⁵⁹. In his Introduction to the English version of the Communist Manifesto, 1888, Engels reasserted this argument. For him, the history of mankind at any epoch is that of class struggle between the exploited, oppressed, the proletariat and the ruling class. The proletariat cannot really emancipate without emancipating at large from the exploitation, oppression, class distinction and struggle⁶⁰.

If there was no such group as the working class in the pre-independent Rwanda as there was no industry nor bureaucracy, it is right to say that the majority of the illiterate and impoverished peasantry was exploited by a small minority of the colonial agents Batutsi nobility imbued with the theories of race supremacy (Maquet, 1970). This trend is also explained in the Marxist’s view of ideology. A. Kee points out the fact that Marx believed that the feudal order was itself evil, set up to mislead the many for the advantage of the few. For Marx, ideas of the ruling class are, in every epoch materially and intellectually, the ruling ideas. An ideology is a system of ideas and values, produced by such a system. It may constitute a world-view; it presents a picture of reality; it offers an explanation of why things are as they are. Because it

⁵⁷ Ibid. p.65

⁵⁸ Bante, M., & Izard, P., *Dictionnaire d’Anthropologie et d’Ethnologie*, Paris: Presse Universitaire de France, 1991, p.345.

⁵⁹ Macintyre, A., *Marxism. An Introduction*, London: SCM Press LTD, 1953, p. 62.

⁶⁰ Ibid.p.72.

provides false picture and false consciousness, it is more likely that both those who are served by it and those who suffered under it wouldn't be aware that it was a merely social construction⁶¹.

In that process Mannheim thinks that the whole society is engaged in a process of ideologisation. For him, the dominant group elaborates ideologies of justification, whilst the dominated groups elaborates the ideologies of protestation. For him, an authentic conscience is not to be found on the side of the proletariat (poor) nor of the bourgeoisie, but from an intelligentsia out of touch with the reality⁶².

In the same line of thinking L. Dumont establishes a link between those who undertake the study of a given society and their motives and backgrounds. He thinks that an authentic analysis of the anthropology of the ideologies can be authentic if only two aspects were taken in consideration: on the one side the anthropological community which justifies its privileges, and on the other hand, the ideology of the society to which belongs the anthropologist as a synthesis of individualism and universalism which found the anthropological project and at the same time rejects the holistic ideology of the societies to which applies the project⁶³.

There is certainly a combination of a few of Marx and Engels, a few of Mannheim and a few of Dumont with regard to what took place in Rwanda. Images, mythico-history and theories given by others have, as showed in chapters one, two, three, four and five, reshaped Rwandan society and given a new consciousness to an elite which started to behave as if they were no longer part of a same community of interests. What we see in Chapters IV and five is the consequence of that. Obviously, the elites, the Batutsi and then the Bahutu have alternatively participated to propagating these theories through a series of mythico-history with the same purpose of monopolising power.

1.3.The Chronicle of Ethnicity

Until the 1960s, the prevalent scholarship on Rwanda supported the early explorers' and colonisers' theories of a 'Hamite monarchy', where the 'Batutsi invaders' dominated over the "indigenous Bahutu and Batwa"⁶⁴. Following the 1994 tragedy, some of the media and

⁶¹ Kee,A., *Scottish Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol. VI, no 2, Autumn 1985, pp.113 & 114.

⁶² Mannheim, K., *Ideology and Utopia. An introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner &co, 1936

⁶³ Dumont, L., *Homo. aequalis, Genese et Epanouissement de l'ideologie economique*, Paris, 1977; *Essais sur l'Individualisme*, Paris, 1984; *L'Homme, Revue Francaise d'Anthropologie*, 1978.

⁶⁴ Maquet,J., *The Indigenous political organisation of the Kingdom of Rwanda*, London: London University College, Ph.D. Thesis, 1952.

Le Systeme des Relations Sociales dans le Rwanda ancien, Tervuren: M.R.C.B., 1954.

The Premise of Inequality in Ruanda, London: Oxford University Press, 1961. See also Kagame, A., *Inganji Karinga*, Kagabyi: 1943.

diplomatic accounts as well as books reproduce the same simplistic discourse from the root causes of the events.

I.3.1. Early Descriptions of Rwanda

The labyrinth of theories which underpinned the hegemonic narratives that ascribed new identity to Rwandans are evident from early contact between Rwanda and the western world representatives. The contributors to one of the best accounts of these ascriptions, the 1990 book edited by Gudrun Honke⁶⁵, analyse with a degree of intellectual honesty, the profiles, experiences, motivations and attitudes of the explorers, ethnologists and missionaries who formed the first European contingent which encountered the Rwandans. The authors show how the narratives initiated a process of ethnic ascription. From 1884 to 1962, Rwanda was under the occupation consecutively of the Germans and Belgians. Rwandan historiography and anthropology have since then been restricted to a domain that fascinated ethnologists and historians from the perspective of socio-political relations, lineage, clans and ethnic groups. One aspect which is noticeably present in those studies is the Hamite theory which opposes the "lords of the thousands hills", the Batutsi to the "vassals, the Bahutu"⁶⁶. Dr Oscar Baumann, an Austrian and the first European to sojourn in Rwanda (1892-1894), set the tone to what was going to become a systematic application of the theory of race supremacy as follows:

Il y a avait partout des Watutsi qui surprenaient par leur sveltesse et leur type presque européen. Certains étaient à peine bruns et ont sans doute été à l'origine de la légende des Nègres Blancs. Partout on pouvait différencier très nettement la population nègre indigène des maîtres Wahuma. Leur façon de s'habiller rappelait les descriptions des figures royales de l'ancienne Assyrie⁶⁷.

The Hamite theory is an exciting story. First considered as the cursed descendants of Ham, exiled to the periphery of humanity, the Hamites would emerge according to Seligman as the "civilising race of Africa", to be considered as Semites or Caucasoid⁶⁸. The colonisers, explorers and missionaries arrived bearing these theories, at the same time as some of the ruling elite in Rwanda were spreading the myth of the origin of the reigning dynasty⁶⁹, the Banyiginya were at that time presenting themselves as people assigned by the deities and the cosmos to a primordial role, of ruling over other clans. The Belgians who followed the Germans in 1916, simply took these myths for historical sources⁷⁰ and utilised them in the formulation of a prosperous scholarship.

Kagame, A., Le Code des Institutions Politiques du Rwanda Pré-coloniale, Bruxelles : I.R.C.B., 1952 ; Arnoux, A., Les Pères Blancs aux Sources du Nil, Paris : 1948.

⁶⁵ Honke, G., (ed) Au Plus Profond de l'Afrique, le Rwanda et la Colonisation Allemande, 1884-1919, Wuppertal: Peter Verlag Hammer, 1990.

⁶⁶ Lame, Danièle de., Une Colline Entre Mille ou le Calme avant la Tempête. Transformation et Blocage du Rwanda Rural, Tervuren : M.R.A.C., VO.154, 1996. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Amsterdam, 1996.

⁶⁷ Honke, G (ed),., op.cit. p.100.

⁶⁸ See also chapter three, section 3.1.

⁶⁹ Heusch, L., De. Le Rwanda et la Civilisation Interlacustre, Bruxelles: Institut de Sociologie, 1966.

⁷⁰ Administration Coloniale, Ruanda-Urundi. Rapport 1926, pp. 54-59

I.3.2. Emerging Perspectives on Ethnicity

The politicisation and systematisation of the ideas of difference among the Banyarwanda which had remained at scholarly and epistolary levels, became more evident in society during the period from 1920 to 1940s. This period corresponds to the so-called colonial reforms, and also to the conversions of the ruling class and the masses. From two major sources, the missionaries' diaries and the Annual Report of the Belgian Colonial Administration for Ruanda-Urundi we are informed of how both the colonial administration and the missionaries collaborated to conceive a vast range of decisions and policies affecting the population. It is worth noticing that from the second half of the 1920s, the annual colonial report includes sections devoted to reports written by the heads of the Catholic, SBMPC (former Bethel mission), CMS and Adventists missions⁷¹. In many instances, the colonial reports linked with the ethnological scholarship which fundamentally affected the history of modern Rwanda.

Maquet developed a theory of the premises of inequality which he said, was based on birth⁷². The individuals were "physically and psychologically unequally equipped". Being born in one or other 'caste' gave fundamentally different rights. This ideology, Maquet pursued, was extended to all domains and reinforced by a number of theorems which proved that the Bahutu accepted the Batutsi domination.

The study of Maquet had become a classic for the school of defenders of ethnicity in the pre-colonial Rwanda. Maquet himself never refers to the context in terms of rivalry Bahutu-Batutsi. Yet, his school, despite the variances such as the difference in socio-economical systems between the centre-south and the north or the social mobility remarked in his book⁷³ as well as the remarkable changes that took place through decades, can still refer to Rwanda as an unchanged society. This line of thinking incorrectly inspired continues however, even today, to have a substantial body of adherents⁷⁴.

Commenting on the 1994 genocide, Luc de Heusch⁷⁵ rejects C. Vidal's thesis in which this French author affirms that the "crystallisation of the relations between the Bahutu and the Batutsi into rigid 'ethnic groups' took place during the period of colonisation". De Heusch rather repeats his thesis in agreement with Maquet, that the kingdom of Rwanda emerged

⁷¹ Pages, A., Au Rwanda, sur le Bord du Lac Kivu (Congo Belge). Un Royaume Hamite au Centre de l'Afrique, Bruxelles: I.R.C.B., 1933. Lacger, L. de. Ruanda, Kabgayi, 1939; 1961; Heusch, Luc de. Ruanda, Tableau d'une Monarchie Féodale, Bruxelles, 1954 (film produced in co-operation with Maquet).

⁷² Maquet, J., Le Systeme des Relations Sociales dans le Ruanda Ancien, Tervuren, : MRCB, 1954. And its English version, The Premises of Inequality in Rwanda, London: Oxford University Press, 1961, p.138.

⁷³ Ibid. pp.136-144.

⁷⁴ Vaughan discusses how ethnicity came to be, its nature, its actors and its significance over the course of history. She opposes the idea of Bayart that ethnicity was an instrumental factor that emerged from the encounter of African society with its external environment, in particular colonialism. For her, ethnicity is a political variable, a key factor in African societies (pre-colonial!), eventually "unconceptualised". La Gorgendiere & al, Ethnicity in Africa, Edinburgh: Centre for African Studies, 1996, p.357.

⁷⁵ Luc de Heusch, "one of Europe's best known Social Anthropologists, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, University of Brussels" has published widely on Africa, particularly a film made with Jacques Maquet on social relations : "Rwanda: Tableaux d'une féodalité pastorale" (1954).

from the meeting of 'indigenous peasants', the Bahutu and 'Batutsi pastoralists' and that through wars against each other "the Banyiginya imposed their supremacy on their Bahutu rivals"⁷⁶. The author however, concedes that "the opposition between Bahutu and Batutsi was evidently not a racial problem, but one of 'hierarchised social classes'. These were transformed into 'racial status' by the ideologues of colonisation, the most influential among them being the missionaries who were the first ethnologists"⁷⁷.

Maquet and de Heuch's model, like the recent studies made by Maniragaba, Nahimana, Erny, Overdulve and others take Rwanda as being a country of ethnic groups fixed in their identities, stratified from pre-colonial period to the present day and yet seemingly well integrated despite or because of the inequality. For Maquet, the equilibrium has been disturbed by external influences, the system of mission education, printed media, the introduction of elections in preparation for independence. We agree with Newbury that "political relations were more complex, and identities less rigid. The structures of the Batutsi domination were more recent and less extensive than the model assumed, and they were transformed in important ways during European colonial rule"⁷⁸.

At the opposite, we find a tendency to which this thesis adheres, demonstrating that Rwandan ethnicism developed out of the actions of the colonial power with the backing from the Catholic Church. Both the colonisers and the missionaries desacralised the authority of the Rwandan monarch, deprived him of his prerogatives, formed an auxiliary elite from among the Batutsi social category of Central Rwanda which was imposed on the rest of the territory rulers in the east, the north, the north-west and the south-west. What were then social classes, the Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa were gradually transformed into ethnic groups. Reyntjens⁷⁹ shows that each time politics and law were competing, during the colonial and the republican periods, the political always had the upper hand. He also shows that post-independence developments have been founded on the manipulation of fears and the practice of violence and scapegoating leading then to political, social and regional tensions crystallised into ethnic conflict.

The race theories that transformed the dynamics of social, cultural and political relationships of one group over the others were imitated by French missionaries from a new theories of which Arthur-Joseph Gobineau was a representative.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Heusch, Luc de., "Responsibility for Genocide", *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 11, No 4, August 1995, p.4.

⁷⁷ Ibid. "It is the missionaries", he wrote, "who concluded that the Tutsi pastoralists with slender figures and clear pigmentation belonged to a superior class, the Hamites, whereas the Hutu peasants were representatives of an inferior Bantu race". p.4.

⁷⁸ Newbury, C., *The Cohesion of Oppression*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1988, p.6.

⁷⁹ Reyntjens, F., *Pouvoir et Droit au Rwanda. Droit et Evolution politique de 1916-1973*, Tervuren: M.R.A.C., N° 117, 1985.

L'Afrique des Grands Lacs en Crises, 1988-1993, Paris: Karthala, 1994; Vidal, C., *La Sociologie des Passions (Cote d'Ivoire, Rwanda)*, Paris: Karthala, 1992; Prunier, G., *Rwanda, History of the Tragedy, 1959-1994*, Kampala: 1995; Guichoua, A., *Les Crises Politiques en Afrique Centrale, Burundi, Rwanda, 1993-1994*, Paris: Kathala, 1995; Nkuzumwami, E., *La Tragédie Rwandaise, Historique et Perspective*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996.

⁸⁰ Franche, D., *Généalogie du Génocide*, Paris: Editions, Mille et Une Nuit, 1997.

That there was a degree of a regional distinctiveness and autonomy is now an undisputed reality confirmed by many researches on Rwanda. Various autonomous regions existed and interacted economically, politically, socially and religiously with the King of Rwanda. This reality was destroyed by the colonial rulers in imposing the centralising rule from the central core monarchy over various regions. Various authors including Roger Louis⁸¹ have shown that these colonial policies, the consequences of the divisions of Africa on the population, the harshness of the colonial repressive machinery and the fate of the diplomacy of European colonial powers which was motivated by hegemony and an appetite for huge economic interests transformed the regional and class variables into an evil ethnic ideology.

I.3.3. Destroying the factors of Ethnic integration

The misinterpretation of social and cultural harmony of Rwanda has ended in the division of the population into antagonistic units. For Georges Balandier, colonisation has eliminated all the original factors of integration and accentuated divisions. For practical reasons he states, political and religious leaders privileged the Batutsi group. The divisions were exacerbated by the Bahutu after independence, for example by introducing the 'numerus clausus'⁸². Like Balandier, Jean-Francois Bayart⁸³ suggests that in designing what was called the *évolués*, a westernised elite, the Belgians have created a "fourth ethnic group"- a concept developed in the research of another French anthropologist, Claudine Vidal. This elite was more destructive because it assimilated and reproduced the colonial stereotypes always referring to the Batutsi as aristocrats of foreign origin, and to the Bahutu as peasants. These constructs of an ethnic conscience were reproduced in the 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s and 90s⁸⁴.

More than the practical reasons referred to by Balandier, the root cause was the racial ideology planted, watered and maintained by both the colonial powers and the Church. The Churches' message seriously warped and distorted the essential tenets of Christian faith as discussed in chapter three. What ought to be underlined here so far is that the process has gradually built up a group's identity. The latter is rooted in belonging to the web of social, economic, political, cultural and religious relationship. In marking the population into distinctive 'races', it contributed to the destruction of many factors of ethnic integration .e.g. some clans had specific community role which the members fulfilled irrespective to being Bahutu, Batutsi or Batwa⁸⁵. As Slattery rightly points out, identity then grows up out of prevailing narratives, sketched and redrafted by culture, contexts, beliefs, values, ideals, interdicts, changes and continuity out of human experiences and relationships⁸⁶.

⁸¹ Louis, R., *Rwanda and Burundi 1884-1919*, London: Oxford University Press, 1963.

⁸² By 'numerus clausus', Balandier was referring to Habyarimana's policies allocating to each 'ethnic group' the places in the schools and administration corresponding to their supposed percentage within the population. Balandier, G., *Interview to Le point*, no 1141 of 30/7/1994, pp 26-27.

⁸³ Author of *Les politiques par le Bas en Afrique noire*.

⁸⁴ *Le Nouvel Observateur*. 2 June 1994, pp. 52-53.

⁸⁵ For example some clans were called *abase* (those who arrived before) and had among other functions to conduct the ritual for the installation, the construction and the inauguration of a new premises. Other clans were providers of the *Abiru*, the ritualists of the monarchy.

⁸⁶ Slattery, M., *op.cit.* p.9-10.

I.3.4. The Rwandan Monarchy

The monarchy of Rwanda was dominated by the Bahindiro lineage from the Banyiginya clan of Batutsi background. It had a number of symbols such as the Karinga emblem-drum. A number of authors have described the Rwandan reality from the cultural, historical and ideological symbols of a monarchy which combined charm and exclusion⁸⁷. Some like Father Del Perugia, a French missionary or a former colonial administrator, Omer Marchal went even as far as to publish a nostalgic homage to the 'Hamite-Batutsi' supremacy, two decades after the abolition of the monarchy⁸⁸.

The role of the educated elite, the cultural and regional variations, the background to the revolution are among other factors which have been transferred into a 'republican monarchism'. The end of the monarchy in 1959 generated thousands of Rwandan refugees who then became one of the major factors in the ethnic tensions in the region. Though persistently using the inappropriate concept of caste, Lemarchand provides a good analytical study of how the monarchy manipulated the existing cultural and ideological symbols which in the end became the fertile field of ethnic plant⁸⁹.

In the 1950's and 1960's which corresponds to the period of great political turmoil on the African continent, the two major elite groups, were led to take an active role, for the first time in a Bahutu-Batutsi confrontation with the colonisers and missionaries in the background door. Nkundabagenzi's collection of the texts for that period⁹⁰ describe the process of the formation of political parties, their manifestos and profiles, their petitions and counter-petitions, the UN and Belgian reactions as well as the religious, political and diplomatic point of view. This material of unrivalled richness shows clearly the responsibility of the different actors in reaffirming the foundations and accelerating the pace of 'ethnic conflict' for which none of them has ever shown any sign of regret. For some, however, even those ideologically oriented like Donat Murego the 1959 social Revolution was imminent with or without the support from the Church and colonial powers⁹¹.

I.3.5. Propaganda of the Republican Regime, 1970's-1980's

The post-independence regimes have had their share in keeping alive the factors of polarisation of society. For some internal and external defenders of these regimes, many of these the 'Batutsi monarchy' was a backward system, a sufficient justification to ban the Batutsi from any form of participation in political life. The essential features of the rare publications within Rwanda paid homage to the President and his ruling party, the MRND.

⁸⁷ Papadopoulos, T., *Poésie Dynastique et Poésie Akristique, Essai de Fixation du temps anthropologique*, London : Kegan Paul, Editions les Belles, 1963; Pauwels, M., Karinga, "Tambour Emblème de la dynastie des Banyiginya du Rwanda". In *Annali, Etno. Missioneo. Vol. XXII*, pp. Roma, 1962; Kagame, A., *Un Abrégé de l'Ethno-histoire du Rwanda de 1853 - 1975*, Butare : Editions Universitaires, 1975 ; Heusch, L. de., *Le Rwanda et la civilisation interlacustre*, Bruxelles : IRSC, 1966.

⁸⁸ Del Perugia, P., *Les derniers rois mages*, Paris: Phebus, 1970; 1978. Marchal, O., *Afrique africaine*, Paris: Fayard, 1983.

⁸⁹ Lemarchand, R., *Rwanda and Burundi*, London : Pall Mall Presse, 1970.

⁹⁰ Nkundabagenzi's thesis, *Rwanda Politique, 1958-1961*, Bruxelles, ISC, 1961.

⁹¹ Murego, D., *La Révolution Rwandaise*, Louvain: Institut des Sciences Politiques et Sociales, 1972.

The authors including former colonial actors like Prof. Harroy and Colonel Logiest would defend the policies of the Habyarimana regime, omitting to see how ethnically oriented they were. C. Mfizi & al, J.P.Harroy, G. Logiest and A. Nduwayezu analyse the Rwandan reality from the angle that sympathises with the Bahutu, considered as the only true nationals⁹². The 1959 social revolution is seen as an act that liberated the Bahutu from four centuries of Batutsi domination and as a noble goal pursued in the ideology of the MRND. For this category of authors, among other achievements of the MRND were to have promoted peace, unity and development and at the same time, to have persuaded the population to accept uncritically their three 'ethnic identities'.

One strategy was to continuously reactivate, as did P.Erny and C.Overdulve the hypothesis of Hamite Batutsi domination⁹³. These two studies stress the social and economical achievements of Habyarimana whom they perceive as victim of the events rather than perpetrator. Overdulve⁹⁴, says this: the Bahutu, whom he refers to as "le peuple" have suffered heavily from many injustices at the hands of the Batutsi. This suffering was recorded in the collective socio-psychological conscience transmitted from generation to generation but never experienced by the Batutsi. The colonisers and the missionaries found the system in place and could do nothing. The social revolution of 1959 abolished this system, but sooner, the Batutsi re-emerged dominant in diverse sectors. For Overdulve, it is true that the MRND (former ruling party responsible for the genocide) regime used all the means it had to stop the opposition from acceding to democratic power. However, the Bahutu were in self-defence in killing the Batutsi each time their kin, the refugees organised various attacks (known as *ibitero by'inyenzi*: attacks of cockroaches).

A thesis identical to Overdulve's has been developed by a professor of philosophy (Maniragaba Baributsa) and in 1993 by an assistant professor of history (F. Nahimana) and a French native, lecturer in Psychology, P. Erny.⁹⁵ This category of authors build up an ideology justifying the massive human rights abuse which is recounted in chapter four. Their perspective is a distortion of the reality; it fixes the structures of social relations between the Rwandans into a framework of "secular ethnicism" on the one hand, while, on the other, it hides the role of the external agents and the elite in the conflict. They don't expose the root causes and agents of ethnicism.

Moreover, this school defends a cynical style of argumentation namely that the Batutsi died because their kin attacked the country. Defending such a hypothesis leads in the view of this

⁹²Mfizi & Al., *Lignes de Faite du Rwanda Indépendant*, Kigali: ORINFOR, 1983; Harroy,J-P., *Rwanda, de la féodalité à la démocratie*, Paris/Bruxelles: Didier/ Hatier,1984; Logiest,G., *Mission Rwanda. Un Blanc dans la Bagarre Hutu-Tutsi*, Paris: Didier/Hatier,1988; Nahimana,F., *Rwanda, Emergence d'un Etat*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1993; Nduwayezu, A. *Imburagihana*, Kigali: Editions Barama,1991.

⁹³Erny, P., *Rwanda, Clé pour Comprendre le Calvaire d'un Peuple*, Paris: l'Harmattan,1994.

⁹⁴Overdulve, C., *Rwanda, un Peuple avec une Histoire*, Paris: l'Harmattan, 1997.

⁹⁵Maniragaba,B., "Les mythes de Fils de Gihanga". In *Les Relations Interethniques au Rwanda à la Lumière de l'Agression d'Octobre 1990*, Ruhengeri: Editions Universitaires, 1991; Nahimana,F., *Rwanda, Emergence d'un Etat*, Paris: l'Harmattan, 1993.

thesis to at least two dangers. First, if the regime dominated by the Bahutu was justified in killing the Batutsi because their kin attacked, then in return today's 'Batutsi dominated' regime would have the right to kill the Bahutu if their kin who went in exile in 1994 attempted to attack. Such reasoning offers a justification to cynical regimes to abuse power over those considered as the losers. The second danger is to divide the population between those who are recognised as true citizens and beneficiaries of a state protection and those who aren't.

This thesis acknowledges the effort made by Kayibanda and his successor, Habyarimana in transforming Rwanda from a political and economical retrograde colonial-feudal society to a modern state, but still believes that the cost in human lives overshadowed positive efforts. In fact, the whole population of Banyarwanda without exception needed to be liberated from a degrading colonial and mystifying system of both the colonisers and the *akazu k' i Bwami* (household of the kingship). The initiation of a culture of violence which followed the 1959 revolution diverted it from a noble goal, that of liberating both the oppressed and the oppressors from the chains of an obscurantist and degrading system so as to rehabilitate them in their dignity as the children of God.

Hence, the revolution was confiscated by a clique of rulers. Such a confiscation up to the use of violence, has been described in penetrating writings by Shyirambere Barahinyura⁹⁶, Gasimba, N.Gordon and Prof. Reyntjens⁹⁷. These studies were really among the rare discordant voices during the Habyarimana's regime. The authors showed the cynicism of a regime perpetuating horrific acts such as the assassination of Kayibanda, Habyarimana's predecessor and hundreds of politicians in terrible conditions, a systematic corruption and hold-up on the institutions and economy of the country while at the same time being able to maintain its credentials before the international diplomatic world.

The rare publications available among the Protestants focus on the record of the 1930s East Africa Revival, on Catechism or on the assumed apparitions in Kibeho⁹⁸. Some publication have attempted to trace a path for a critical and visionary ethic and a liberating ecumenical theology; yet they had relatively little impact⁹⁹.

I. 4. Ethnicity and Issues of Identity

Despite the above mentioned factors of integration, it must be recognised that Rwandan society prior to colonisation had some distortions. In fact, the monarch and his entourage were shaping the political, administrative, cultural, social and military instruments of power

⁹⁶ Shyirambere Barahinyura., *Le Général - Major Habyarimana Juvénal, Quinze de Dictature et de Tartufferie*, Frankfurt: Editons Izuba, 1988.

⁹⁷ Gordon, N., *Murder in the Midst*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1993.

⁹⁸ Osborn, H., *Fire in the Hills. The Revival which Spread from Rwanda*, Crowborough, East Sussex: Highland books, 1991; Church, J., *Quest for the Highest. Diary of the East African Revival*, Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1981; Van der Meersch, J., *Le Catechumenat au Rwanda de 1900 à nos Jours*, Kigali: Pallotti Presse, 1993; Misago, A., *Apparitions de la Vierge à Kibeho au Rwanda*, 1991; Maindrion, G., *La Vierge Mary au Rwanda au Coeur de l'Afrique*, Paris: AOIL, 1984.

⁹⁹ Karamaga, A., *Evangile en Afrique, Ruptures et Continuité*, Morges: Cabedita, 1990; Gatwa, T& Karamaga, A., *Les Autres Chrétiens, Présence Protestante*, Kigali: Urwego, 1990.

and control of resources on the eve of colonisation and implantation of Christianity. Among other tools, they would exploit the myths, legends and the culture of secrecy reinforced by the ritual secret code kept by the college of Abiru, the specialists of the tradition of the monarchical institutions. This was asserted by Ntezimana¹⁰⁰ who then offered a severe criticism of our past and recent culture:

La culture Rwandaise, une culture fermée, d'enclos (umuco w'urugo, umuco w'infunganwa, w'inkomane) est en crise, elle éclate même et c'est heureux pour les jeunes et les générations futures. Politiquement, et les 25 ans de règne aussi bien monarchiques que républicains le montrent, cette culture est ésotérique, cynique, sinieuse et souterraine. Elle légitime régulièrement un rythme, cyclique et infernal, de crises fratricides.¹⁰¹

Prof. Ntezimana insinuates in this passage the culture of violence initiated by the politicians. He went further and invited the Rwandan people to "explode" this culture of secrecy and exclusion imposed by the political decision-makers, to liberate all the categories manipulated, the poor and the marginalised so that they may have hope instead of resembling a people always turning to their pre-history.

Instead of smoothing away the distortions like these denounced by Ntezimana so as to cement in place the many factors of unity, an imperative of the Christian message, the Churches co-operated in modelling a society for the interest of the imperial power¹⁰². Both Catholics and Protestants, not only identified themselves with the political power, but went one step more in spreading a discriminatory ideology, thus compromising the chances to be the alternative to the unjust system. D. de Lame has a similar observation when she says that in the early 1930s the Catholic Church was so close to the colonial power that it was incapable of being an alternative to forced labour, to fatigue, to compulsory conversions and so forth¹⁰³.

The handicaps that prevented the Church from becoming a healing factor, are threefold. One, when they engaged in a competition in the new fields of mission, both Catholics and Protestants were not healed from the wounds of the 16th century that resulted in the Protestant Reformation. Two, their theologies were influenced by the 19th and early 20th centuries based on the theory of racial supremacy. Three, as in the colonial period, the Church leaders in the post-independence era became part of a dominant system that subsists by victimisation and perpetuation of prejudices and violence against others. Today's emerging theological thought in Rwanda attempts to challenge the approach that stereotyped people into fixed units; it establishes the continuity between two interpretations of the message of God. The one made by the external missionaries, and the other made by the local

¹⁰⁰ In December 1992, the late Prof. Ntezimana, President of the human rights association, ADL pronounced a prophetic speech in introducing the 382 page book containing the first report made by this first born Rwandan Human Rights organisation. He evoked the "words of racist ideologues inciting the population to apply and generalise the law of *lex italiano*". He wondered if the "predictions of the unfortunate 'diviner' or 'prophetess' Magayane- who several years ago predicted the death of the leader of the country which would be followed by a bloodshed without precedent- were not beginning to happen".

¹⁰¹ Association de Défense des Droits de l'homme et des Libertés Publiques (ADL), Rapport sur la Situation des Droits de L'homme, Kigali : Décembre 1992, p.11.

¹⁰² See chapter III, the section on the revocation of King Musinga.

¹⁰³ Lame, Daniele de., op. cit. p.51. See also J-P.Chretien, 1985,p.141 and particularly, Reytnjens, 1985.

population in the pre-missionary era in showing that God the Provider, the Creator (*Imana y'I Rwanda, Rugira, Rurema*) for the Rwandans, the heavenly Father for the Christians, gave us an identity constantly transformed, renewed by Jesus-Christ through conversion, baptism, Eucharist and Koinonia.

I. 5. Identity and Shaping of Hostility Against the Other

In Rwanda the ethnic identity process owes much to the historical, cultural, colonial and Christian narratives. These factors helped to draw up the tools of ethnic bounds for control of power in a community where the other is effectively eliminated. According to Slattery, two processes intervene: firstly, a strategic syncretism marrying diverse versions of history with myth, facts and reality. Secondly, the legitimisation or rejection of changes in reinventing the past is always motivated by a passion to reverse the balance of power and is often accompanied by an ideological dimension proving the theory of differences¹⁰⁴.

I.5.1. Identity and the Past

In the process of the shaping of ethnic identity, links are established with the past, space and the culture, not so as to assemble positive factors for the reinforcement of a common present and the future, but to justify the division and to emphasise the necessity of a projection excluding the Other. The "fourth ethnic group" (i.e. the elite) reproduced the mythical history of a warrior Hamite dynasty who subjected the Bahutu monarchs and unified Rwanda on the other hand. Rightly or wrongly, they nurtured the ambition and aspirations of those in the inner circle of the regime were opposed to sharing power with the opposite group.

The justification of present or projected exclusion of the members of a different community is built around the images and descriptions made on us by the myths, legends, tales and narratives told to us and on us. On the other hand, the tragic specific events become a powerful 'evidence' for the rejection of the vision of a common destiny. The Bahutu hard-liners would etch stories of domination when they were excluded, humiliated by the coalition of colonisers, missionaries and the Batutsi elite. They perceived the Batutsi through the eyes of Uburetwa, ubuhake and ikiboko, all forms of discrimination before 1959 and the 1972, 1988 and 1993 tragedy of the Bahutu in Burundi. At the same time, cultural activities which praise the achievements of one's group may fuel the hostility of the other¹⁰⁵.

The Bahutu on the other hand, are perceived by the Batutsi through the violent traumatic events of the 1959, 1964, 1973, 1994 and selected portrayals that enhanced the state of martyrdom. At the same time cultural realities of the exiles such as songs, poems, literature that reminds the empire of a thousand hills conquered by Tutsi warrior monarchs exhume the resentment of previous generations who experienced the exclusion in the pre-independence period.

¹⁰⁴ Slattery, M., Op. cit. p.15

¹⁰⁵ Abanyuramatwi group's songs, '*ibigwi by'abaparmehutu*' (the bravery of the militants of Parmehutu); the songs and diverse programmes praising the victory of '*inzirabwoba*' (those who have no fear), the army of the Habyarimana regime over the inyenzi (cockroaches) and so forth.

From both sides, these aspects threaten the other's vision. In fact, while celebrating one's identity, those enclosed with their ethnic boundaries rarely take into account the frustrations and marginalisation their actions create in the opposite group. The Batutsi hard-liners would rarely refer to the pre-independence injustice and oppression of large sections of the population, Bahutu and Batutsi as the root causes of the 1959 revolution. Similarly, the Bahutu hard-liners, would rarely refer to the repetition of violence against the Batutsi and their exclusion as the motive of the 1990 RPF attack.

These aspects charged with sufferings of the emotional resentment of the present day generations were constantly renewed, during the 1990s crisis. The hostility against the other was organised on a political, military and cultural basis. The MRND/CDR political organisations had promoted their armed right hands, the Interahamwe ("those who attack together") and Abahuzamugambi ("those who have the same goal"), Amasasu, death squads, Zero networks, the 'loud-speakers' which claimed to represent the aspirations of their institutions. On the ideological and cultural level, they developed a chain of media and cultural activities which ran almost exclusively *anti-Batutsi* and *anti-ibyitso* (accomplices) programmes.

Although the Banyarwanda lived together in their mixed neighbourhoods, in the identity narrative of the 1990s, the Bahutu extremist swore to send the Batutsi towards Ethiopia¹⁰⁶. Ethiopia was the country to which the explorers, colonial and missionary accounts associated with the Batutsi; the reality for the hard-liners has never changed since. On the other hand, there is a potential for those who perceive society in a continuing binary opposition to interpret the installation of the 1959 refugees by the new regime, in the former mythical kingdoms of Mubari (present day name: Mutara), Gisaka and Bugesera ¹⁰⁷as well as the occupation of the lands, properties and businesses of the Bahutu who went in exile in the aftermath of the genocide, as a strategy to 'reinvent' a mythical past for domination.

In fact, Rwandans have come to the stage when many of them interpret the reality of their country through a mythico-history. Writing on the issue of interpreting the history of violence in Burundi, Lemarchand uses the notion of 'mythico-history' borrowed from Liisa Malkki¹⁰⁸. In our turn, we borrow the concept to characterise the ongoing process of reading or rewriting Rwandan history. The mythico-history as Lemarchand says, is "the mixture of fact and fiction designed to offer each community retrospective validation of its own interpretation of the genesis of the conflict. This phenomenon brings inevitably the notion of 'cognitive dissonance' or the perceptual screening of dissonant facts omits critically important

¹⁰⁶ Mugesera speech in Kabaya, November 1992, entire text in Guichoua, A., op. cit. p. 620/21.

¹⁰⁷ These regions have been described by Father Kagame and other ethnologists as historical 'Hamite kingdoms', see chapter 3 of this work.

¹⁰⁸ Lemarchand, R., Burundi, Ethnic Discourse and Genocide, Washington & London: Woodrow Wilson center, 1996, p.19.

bits of evidence from the picture, making it consistent with one's normative assumptions about the why and how of ethnic violence"¹⁰⁹.

I.5.2. Identity and 'Meta-Discourse'

The first version of the mythico-history supports the idea of ethnic conflict resulting from the historical antagonism of Bahutu and Batutsi. For the tenets of this primordialist theory, all the Batutsi, including those totally excluded from power and resources¹¹⁰ were oppressors and all the Bahutu oppressed. The defenders of such a view never acknowledge the reality of the genocide but talk about the war which they fought and lost, or the inter-ethnic massacres in which the Bahutu who were attacked defended themselves¹¹¹. This theory of 'secular rivalry' imprisoned the Church leaders in the fatality and inevitability of the conflict. It reinforced their complacency faced with the cynical politics of ethnic discrimination which manipulated people's identities, feelings and frustrations.¹¹² This collusion was reinforced by the fact that the two main Christian families and their hierarchies were enrolled in the MRND system, first as individual members of the clergy as it was for all citizens of the land and then as representatives of their institutions as discussed in Chapter Four.

The second mythico-history presents the ethnic conflict as the direct outcome of colonial rule. According to this tendency, pre-colonial society was harmonious, tolerant, and responsibly participating. Racial ideology was strongly planted in 1959 by Perraudin, Logiest and Kayibanda. It came as the direct extension of the colonial and missionary divisions of the 1920s, 30, 40s out of which numerous factors were used to group the population along ethnic lines as described in the conclusions of the reflection of the Protestant Council of Rwanda (CPR).

The ideology of ethnicism is the main cause of the genocide, the divisions and the recurring tragedies which have plunged our country into mourning since 1959. It is the Church in its institutions and in some individuals which has a great responsibility both in the elaboration of this ideology and of its diffusion. Influenced by the pseudo-scientific theories of their time and in the shadow of colonisation, the missionaries have contributed to create the ethnic problem by confusing social economic categories with ethnicity¹¹³.

The evidences of colonial role in the ethnisation of Rwandan society is irrefutable as indicated above. Nonetheless, this thesis aims to overcome the danger which occurs in the CPR passage of underestimating the role of the Rwandan elite in both groups, in the

¹⁰⁹ Lemarchand, *ibid.* p.

¹¹⁰ Bugingo, J-B., *Interview at Detmold*, December, 1996.

¹¹¹ Interview in Nairobi, a bishop met together with a hard-liner of the interim government. See also, De Lame, *op.cit.*, 294.

¹¹² This contradicts the reality at the grass-roots. Concurring witnesses show that the population had little of such hatred. "People in the rural area lived peacefully together. The seed of violence was always sown by the authorities from Kigali" recounted a group of community leaders from the 11 communes of Gisenyi. Witnesses accounts given during two consecutive Seminars on human rights, May 30 to June 5, 1993 in Nyundo in which the present author was one of the facilitators.

A similar message was repeated by the population of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri to a joint delegation of Human Rights organisations and journalists who visited the area in February 1993 following the massacres organised by the MRND/CDR.

¹¹³ CPR, "L'Église Avant, Pendant et Après le Génocide", in *Bâtissons*, no 10, 1997, p.2.

Churches, as well as the risk of reducing the whole process of exclusion of the Other to the responsibility of a few individuals.

The third myth-history refers to tragic events, - the massacres which occurred in 1959, 1964, 1990-1994 and identifies the responsibility of the extremists on one side but omits to link the less than tolerant attitude in the other camp. Abundant literature, in particular the Nkundabagenzi's valuable collection (1961) shows the responsibility of the extremist Batutsi elite in rejecting moderate changes proposed by the Bahutu elite, or the obvious responsibility of the ethno-republican politicians. Nkundabagenzi's collection also highlights the role and compromise of other actors including the colonial administration and the Church in organising the events that had such a subsequent negative impact

The fourth mythico-history presents the conflict as a 'politico- ethnic' violence as a plot from outside. Instead of considering the concerns of the refugees and the Batutsi who were deprived of their rights, the Habyarimana regime preferred to advance the hypothesis of a Museveni hegemonic plot to install a "Hamite/Hima-Tutsi empire" in the great lakes region of Africa with the Batutsi as his instruments. This attitude does not move an inch from the conservative Batutsi elite who refused to listen to the suffering of the Bahutu in 1958 and later continued to explain the 1959 revolution as a plot of the Belgians and the Church to perpetuate neo-colonialism. A similar attitude marks the thinking of the militaro-bureaucratic elite in Burundi which constantly accuse their fellow Bahutu citizens of being influenced by the Rwandan regime, thus refusing them a genuine sharing of power. Jacques and Helen Kūng rightly point out that "troubling stories of atrocities committed against the Batutsi in Rwanda, or stories of atrocities committed against the Bahutu in Burundi created 'a symmetry of distress', even before the 1994 tragedy:

Partager le pouvoir ici au Rwanda avec les Tutsi? Vous n'y pensez pas! Voyez comment ils traitent les Hutu au Burundi!", "Partager le pouvoir ici au Burundi avec les Hutu? Pas question, ce serait notre mort: voyez comment ils traitent les Tutsi au Rwanda!"¹¹⁴

The various tragic events and the suffering of one group in one country created a syndrome of fear and mistrust among the opposite group in the other country. In the end, the interpretation of the history throughout the prism of ethnic ideology in both countries is a factor that cannot be left out in an eventual attempt at mediation.

The last mythico-history was a calculated misinformation in which the extremists manipulated the fears, angers and frustrations of the masses with, "kill the enemy before they kill you". One of these frustrations came from the poverty and the uncertainty in peoples' lives¹¹⁵. The propaganda of the regime would permanently brandish the threats of the former

¹¹⁴ Kūng, J& H., "Il ya encore des artisans de paix au Rwanda". In *Perspectives Missionnaires*, no 33, Lausanne : 1997, pp. 8-24.

¹¹⁵ The impact of poverty, in particular the shortage of land for a 95 % rural population was crucial. In the early 1960s its potential to create a disaster was foreseeable. Segal reported the 1959, 1963/4 tragic events, and recognised that an unprecedented step in Africa to remove an unequal system happened. He added that because of the uncertainty of the refugees and the existence of so many people on a small piece of land, Rwanda should be assisted to secure its future by long-term economic development aid and regional integration. He also suggested that there be set up the mechanisms to protect against the annihilation of the Tutsi people before the chaos engulfs Burundi. Segal, Aaron., *Massacres in Rwanda*. London: the Fabian Society, 1964. p. 27.

'Batutsi conquerors' who would attempt re-appropriate the lands, the cattle and all the business that had been acquired by the sweat of the Bahutu.

I.5.3. Identity, the Being and Becoming

Lastly, Identity relates to the present and future and implies both being and becoming. Projected to the present and the future, the conflicting past would contemplate the achievements of the regime in various domains then, predicting an eventual withdrawal from political power would consider the Other as a threat, or an usurper. The process nourishes pride, fears, projections and speculations for new rituals, identities, formulations and plans. This has something to do with the tendency to restrict privileges to a selected elite. Christianity has provided literacy sponsorship, social constructs, new rituals of a hegemonic character. Being educated in selected missionary schools for the sons of the Batutsi chiefs, and converting to Catholicism gave rights to be named to posts of responsibility and to gain other privileges.

Following the political changes in the late 1950s missionaries and colonisers now reversed the narratives in asserting that, the Bahutu, once considered not clever, incapable of ruling, were now intelligent and could accede to command. Paradoxically, there was no sign of confession and repentance for the past malformation of the social reality¹¹⁶ by the Churches.

Unlike the Kayibanda regime where only the Catholic Church was privileged, Habyarimana (1973-1994) gave a new dimension of extreme cordiality to the Church- hierarchies both Catholics and Protestants. These personal and friendly relationships developed with the Church hierarchies, were, I believe, one of the crucial steps which led the Protestant leaders to endorse the regime's ethnic policies. As we will see, Church-State relations improved, whilst ecumenical relations remained as distant and suspicious as ever¹¹⁷. Equally, the relationship and communication within individual ecclesial denominations did not improve much either as evident from the example of Episcopalians and the hidden tensions within the Catholic Church described in chapter four.

The fact that Christianity failed to develop forms of mutual enrichment and common witness, allowed the regime free reign to conceive strategies for its divinisation. Equally, despite a number of achievements in the sector of development to which the Churches gave their full support, the deterioration of the socio-economic conditions and the hopelessness of the population have proved to be a fertile field for the manipulators of ethnic hatred. The impact

¹¹⁶ In fact, society was dominated by the two institutions, Church and State. The hierarchies 'wisely' avoided to getting in each other's way, except for some scuffles in 1966 and 1968. In 1966, the government nationalised the schools in a period when dissenting voices were starting to be heard among the politicians of the ruling party, the Parmehutu. In 1968, Semusambi a journalist of Kinyamateka newspaper was imprisoned while its director, Father Enzo Maida, an expatriate was expelled from Rwanda. In the 1980s, the director, Father Sindambiwe, was continuously harassed by the Intelligence Service. Dismissed, he later died in a not elucidated road accident. In 1990s his successor, Father Sibomana and the journalists were brought to tribunal by the same Intelligence Service. When the journalists threatened to reveal to the public all they knew on the corruption of the regime, then the regime withdrew the accusations.

See also Reyntjens, 1985, p.401.

¹¹⁷ Misago, A., op.cit. p.420.

of poverty in the genocide was emphasised in a number of publications¹¹⁸. In an article written by the head of a British Charity organisation, the author, Fiona Fox, sees two major causes of the tragedy: the impoverishment of the population following the fall of coffee prices, the major source of income, and the international pressure for economic and political reforms and peace negotiations¹¹⁹. Poverty is a major factor in the shaping of people's identity, severely determining the potential of being and becoming. However, we must avoid blaming the poor; these did not recruit, train, organise the convoys of the militia nor did they give the orders to perpetuate the massacres around the country.

I.6. Rwandan Ethnicity: A Poisonous Plant

To conceptualise our reflection on the development of ethnicity, we can detect two competing schools. On the one hand, stands the primordialist- school which claims that the Bahutu-Batutsi rivalry is a pre-colonial reality which grew from the early period of myths and legends in Rwanda. On the other hand there is the instrumentalist school with its tendency to argue that ethnicity is a colonial and missionary invention. But at least, both schools converge on the fact that notions like caste, race, ethnic group, tribe, were unknown prior to colonisation as people identified themselves by clan and shared various social and cultural aspects of life¹²⁰. This thesis defends the opinion that the 'instrumentalist school', or the authors who trace the genesis of ethnic rivalry to different mechanisms set up during colonial and missionary era to shape society as being a key factor in the development of the conflict. This said, the thesis acknowledges the enormous responsibility of the conservative Batutsi in the pre-independence period, and the ethno-politicians in the post-independence in amplifying the ethnic ideology. By no means does the author perceive social, cultural and political relations among the Banyarwanda people as marked by ethnic rivalry outside the influence of these three categories of actors, colonial, missionary and local elites.

This line of analysis fits into some recent historical developments in anthropology. According to the 1991 Dictionary of Ethnology and Anthropology, the scholars have come to realise that what were supposedly traditional ethnic groups are in fact a colonial creation with a set of strategies designed to transform in a scholarly language the stereotypes ascribed to the populations. Hence Frederick Barth's definition of ethnic groups: "a category of ascription whose continuity rests on the perpetuation of boundaries and the codification

¹¹⁸ Marysse and Ndayambaje, S, Herdt, T & Ndayambaje, E., Rwanda Appauvrissement et Ajustement Structurel. Paris/ Bruxelles: l'Harmattan & CEDAF, 1994, No 12.

¹¹⁹ Fox, F., "Rwanda, the role of Journalists" In The Month, May 1996 says that the west made a mistake in pushing fast, cornering and isolating Habyarimana in the process of "democratisation and peace negotiations, in the face of the RPF, the dominance of the Hutu groups in the state, and the risk of a wider civil war". This point is untenable. It may fall in the "secular opposition" arguments that led the hard-liners to block the democratic and peace processes on the ground that they ruled for the majority. Banyarwanda, Bahutu and Batutsi, altogether wanted democracy and peace; they believed in the necessity of power sharing. It is for that reason that many Hutu paid their lives. The economic crisis and international pressure for political changes can not be taken as causes of the genocide; they however have been among the facilitating factors.

¹²⁰ Maniragaba, 1991, 98; D'Hertefelt, 1971, de Heusch, 1994; Maquet, 1954; Reyntjens, 1985; Rapport Administration coloniale, 1926.

constantly renewed of cultural differences between neighbouring groups"¹²¹ pertains to the perspective of this thesis.

Assessed from F. Barth's point of view, Rwandan reality was a high degree of harmony through the manifestation of cultural, religious and social unity: the community of customs, the social organisation, the intermarriages; the mixture in the prominent social organisation, the clan; the mixture of inhabitants around the country. It is also worth noticing that the majority of the population were impoverished within the three social categories, that the traditional professions commingled (many Bahutu were pastoralists and many Batutsi agriculturalists) and lastly, the absence of any conflict opposing the Bahutu to the Batutsi or the Batwa¹²². Secondly, the hypotheses of the assumed migrations of the Batutsi from either Egypt or Ethiopia as recently as the 16 century¹²³ or elsewhere are not yet substantiated scientifically either from the chronicles or through oral traditions of the regions including Ethiopia itself which has a long history of written literature.

Hence, whatever origin the Bahutu and Batutsi might have had they came to gradually form a community of common destiny unified by language, history and culture, religion and a vision of the universe, sharing similar custom and tradition. They shared a geographical space, before the society was fractured along ethnic and regional lines as shown in the next chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter aimed to define the social, cultural and human context out of which ethnic ideology in Rwanda has developed. The discussions outlined three dimensions related to the rise of Ethnic identity in Rwanda; the early descriptions of Rwanda by externals; the destruction of the factors of ethnic integration; the issues of identity and hostility against the Other. The central argument was that the narratives of Rwanda from the beginning of evangelisation in 1900 were formed out of a Christianising process which did not hesitate to appeal to the theories of race supremacy. These narratives have continued to be manifested in the mythico-history, or the validation of one's own interpretation of the genesis and factors of the conflicts. From then on, the scholarship on Rwanda developed into two schools, the *primordialist* and the *instrumentalist*. The subscription of the Churches to the myths of ethnic identity exposed their incapacity to manifest the body of Christ in love, compassion and reconciliation.

As part of the discussions a range of concepts have emerged. These include the ruling class or the Batutsi nobility, external influences including explorers, colonisers and missionaries and the ethno-politicians (some post-independence Rwandan leaders); hegemonic narratives; ascriptions; mythico-history and history resentment; planting of racial ideology, divinisation and legitimisation of the dictatorial regimes. The next two chapters explore in a comparative

¹²¹ Barth, F., *Ethnic Boundaries*, 1969, p.14.

¹²² D'Hertefelt, op.cit. p.75.

¹²³ Kagame, A., "Les Hamites du Rwanda sont-ils des Gallas?", In *Academie Royal des Sciences Coloniales*, N.S.Z., 1956, PP 341-363.1952.

manner, diverse degrees of responsibility of the external agents and investigate the new images given to Rwandans.

CHAPTER II: FROM ETHNIC INTEGRATION TO RACIAL

IDEOLOGY: ROLE OF COLONIAL POWER 1900-1960

Introduction:

The examination of ethnic ideology in Rwanda is inevitably linked to the confrontation between two realities : pre-colonial Rwandan society and colonialism together with Christianity. It implies the study of the organisation of Rwandan society before the encounter as well as the aspects brought in from outside by colonialists and missionaries. Was Rwanda a harmonious society of equal opportunities for all ? Were the populations part of an integrated nation, or were they antagonist groups branded with their own identities ? How was the social, political and economic organisation structured ? Equally, it may be relevant to know how both colonialism and Christianity conceived their relationships with the Rwandan population. Have they been factors for harmony or for the disintegration of social relations?

This chapter looks at ethnic ideology as an instrument of domination from two angles. First it discusses how the elite from the dominant lineages in pre-colonial society was trying to monopolise political power; second, the role of colonialism. The scope of this chapter together with the next, starts at the beginning of this century and includes the narratives of Rwanda which have been told by five categories of agents: the explorers, the colonisers, the missionaries, the Batutsi ruling class and elite and then the Hutu elite.

The core argument here is that the development of that ideology has been reflected in a number of presuppositions. First, the conception of Rwanda as an unequal society, a stratified hierarchy dominated by "a clan of foreign conquerors". Contrary to much of ethnological scholarship, the present work argues that this unequal system was restricted to the domain of political power and served the purpose of conserving the economic resources in the 'central core' regions while in the satellite and frontier regions they had another type of socio-political organisation.

In the central core, the King and Queen mother reigned in the name of the emblem-drum, Karinga ; they were represented in the whole country by chiefs and sub-chiefs, named from the *akazu k'i bwami* (the household of the royal family). In the various satellites and in north, west, south west and east and the satellite regions, the south- west of Uganda, the Karagwe province in the west of Tanzania, and east of Zaire (all speak the same language Kinyarwanda, the same language spoken in Burundi, the Kirundi language), the authority of the Mwami of the central Kingdom was nominative. However, these regions and countries have many factors that reinforced cultural, linguistic, social, religious integration. They belonged to the same social organisations, the clans and had the same cultural and religious practices.

It is during the attempt made at the beginning of this century- and that is the focal point of this chapter- to impose by force the representatives of the unequal political organisation

predominant in the central Kingdom on the autonomous regions, that most of the factors for integration disappeared.

Another presupposition evoked in the precedent chapter is that the internal centrifugal forces, including the royal lineages of the fractions of Banyiginya-Bega clans, in their struggle for power and control of production had started (at the eve of colonisation and Christianisation) to form a class identity which became the cradle of the colonial-missionary ethnic infrastructure.

The introduction of colonisation- first German from 1884 to 1916, then Belgian, 1916 to 1962- and Christianity, both Roman Catholic and Protestant from 1900 brought new actors who shaped people, institutions and the entire society. These new actors- and there is the third presupposition- would separate the population and conceive the policies according to 'race' differences. Colonisation together with Christianity inaugurated their encounter with Rwanda within the framework of new theories in social science such as 'social Darwinism' which provided the theoretical underpinning of race supremacy. Both colonialists and missionaries opted for the formation of a so-called elite capable of "understanding and promoting the western civilisation and Christianity". According to both missionaries and colonialists the Batutsi who were believed to be the Hamites, a civilising race, were assumed to be the only ones capable of providing such an elite.

This was reflected in the continuous caricaturing and stereotyping of the population. It was reflected also in the offering of privileges in schools, administration and in imposing the Batutsi rulers on the formerly autonomous regions. The new rulers thus modelled a gradual fractured society ending in the social revolution of 1959 which aggravated the wounds. There too was inaugurated another presupposition, the new dimensions to a culture of violence and impunity, an episode which ended in the 1994 tragic events.

This chapter also examines, some of the factors of integration between Bahutu, Batwa and Batutsi that existed in pre-colonial Rwanda. It discusses the existence of an unequal political organisation in the central Kingdom and the role played by its social dynamics as well as the responsibility of the colonisers in the disintegration of these factors. Equally the chapter debates the motives which led the colonial authorities to shift their alliances from the Batutsi nobility towards the Bahutu.

II. 1. Rwandan Society: the Factors of integration

At the end of 19th century, Rwanda 'territorial reality' was made up of several Kingdoms of variable longevity and dimensions. There was a central 'core', the satellites or autonomous monarchies in the periphery, in the northern region, the west and the south, and the frontier regions outside the present day borders¹²⁴. To put this reality in the way of the mythical

¹²⁴ Ntezimana, E., "Le Rwanda Social, Administratif et Politique à la Fin du Dix-Neuvième Siècle". In Honke, Au plus Profond de l'Afrique. Le Rwanda et la Colonisation Allemande, 1884-1919, Wuppertal: Peter Verlag Hammer, 1990, p. 73.; see also Attenbury, C., Revolution in Rwanda, Madison, Wisconsin: African Studies Program-University of Wisconsin, 1970, pp. 8/9.

ideology of the central Kingdom, and in the terms of Father M. Pauwels, when the Germans arrived in 1898, the unity of the country around Karinga (see details below), was not so evident as often claimed. There were still "Hamite rebel Kingdoms" recently conquered (Bugesera, Gisaka, Ndorwa) and some autonomous 'Bahutu monarchies' in the remote regions of north, north-west and south-west (Bukunzi, Busozo, Bushiru, Cyingogo, Ndorwa, Rukiga, Bugoyi).¹²⁵

However, the population, Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa shared many common factors, a linguistic unity, a social organisation based primarily on the clan; they shared the same religion. These cultural and social realities as said before, went beyond the political system prevailing in the central Kingdom where the military and administrative institutions were under the control of a monarch from the Batutsi lineages of the Banyiginya clan. Most of the scholars agree on the fact that in pre-colonial Rwanda, people identified themselves not by ethnic group or races which were unknown to them¹²⁶ but by clan.

II. 1.1 Social organisation: the notion of clan

There has been unanimity among the ethno-historians that the clan was the far most important social organisation in pre-colonial society. Equally, scholars agree on the fact that Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa constituted socio-classes which belonged indistinctly to identical clans¹²⁷. The clan is a social category whose members declare they descend from an eponymous common ancestor, fictions or mythical. It is a common denominator, a designer of lineages separated and who do not necessarily know each other, many estranged by their social stratification. Ethnicity, according to many scholars is a collective group consciousness defined by reference to a configuration of elements such as language, homeland, descent, religion, values; it is always in comparison with other neighbouring groups. Some of these characteristics may shift, but the need for that identity seems to be permanent, fulfilling the need for belonging¹²⁸. The presence of the three classes, Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa in each of the clans is one of the significant phenomenon characterising the integration of the Banyarwanda people. In his study completed at the end of 1950s, D'Hertefelt summarised the existing studies on the notion of clan from Czekanowski (1907) to the late 1950s¹²⁹. He identified 18 clans all of them common denominators to Bahutu, Batutsi, Batwa¹³⁰.

¹²⁵Rapport colonial administration Ruanda-Urundi,1922-1930.

¹²⁶ Maniragaba, op.cit. p.98.

¹²⁷ D'Herteflet, 1971; Canon de Lacger, 1939, 2nd edition, 1961.

¹²⁸ Consultation WCC, WRA, WLF. In Tschuy, 1997, p.156.

¹²⁹ D'Hertedfelt,M., Les clans du Rwanda ancien. Eléments d'ethnohistoire et d'ethnosociologie, Tervuren: MRAC, 1971

¹³⁰ Composition of clans per social class(%) situation of 1960 (d'Hertefelt: 1971, see note 21)

	Singa	Sindi	Zigaba	Gesera	Nyiginya	Ega	Banda	Cyaba
Hutu	86,23	93,04	93,64	90,026	57,50	78,22	95,29	85,74
Tutsi	13,62	6,71	6,12	9,16	42,27	21,36	3,92	14,14
Twa	0,11	0,17	0,21	0,58	0,15	0,38	0,71	0,10

Irrespective of being Bahutu, Batutsi or Batwa the members of the same clan have in common many factors such as the totemisms, religious beliefs and ritual functions such as *ubuse*¹³¹. The members of the same clan were compelled to adhere to the clan solidarity and fraternity¹³². D'Hertefelt then concluded that the most important problem of Rwanda has been the failure of the first western reporters to understand the meaning of the clan, the "most meaningful social organisation of Rwanda".

D'Hertefelt does not demonstrate the process of the creation and the organisation of the clan which is neither the scoop of the present thesis. However, he shows his disappointment at what he considers the failure of the abundant ethnological studies to define clearly the link between the clan and the concepts of Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa. He tends to suggest that the three groups were initially distinct but then mixed up at various stages to form social classes which have now lost their meaning to become 'ethnic' group or 'tribe'¹³³ by the will of ethnologists. In a prophetic reflection Dr Johanssen of the Bethel mission warned about the unpredictable consequences of the dissolution of the clans which he considered as a "religious communion"¹³⁴.

The importance of the clan factor was shared by many other authors, even the most partisan of racial difference, like Ferdinand Nahimana¹³⁵. Nahimana estimates that "around the whole country Rwandan people attach the highest importance to the clan as unifying factor, because it confers a feeling of belonging to a 'social entity'. That brings him to raise "a pertinent question: how Rwandans arrived at this positive, attaching, responsible attitude towards members of their respective clan which does not necessarily correlate immediately with family and lineage"¹³⁶.

	Ungura	Shamba	Tsobe	Kono	Ha	Shingo	Nyakarama	Sita
Hutu	97,78	63,44	62,94	28,34	41,30	26,32	39,85	48,44
Tutsi	2,07	36,34	36,81	71,66	58,70	73,68	60,15	51,56
Twa	0,15	0,22	0,13					
	Ongera	Enengwe						
Hutu	67,33	75,00						
Tutsi	32,67	25,00						

Total Poll.....	N= 92,707
Hutu	N=77,374 (83.46)
Tutsi.....	N=14,750 (15,91)
Twa.....	N=238 (0,26)
Others.....	N=345 (0,37)

Comments on the table

- N: total interviewed
- a. The poll was made through an interview with all the voters of 1960 elections organised by UN prior to the abolition of the monarchy and the colonial administration.
 - b. People were asked to say their clan and the interviewer had to check in the identity booklet. The same clans comprise Abahutu, Abatutsi, Abatwa in the proportions they are represented among the population.

¹³¹ *Ubuse* phenomenon has for among other functions, a ritual of purification for members of family at the ends of the mourning period; the purification of the space in the starting and inauguration of a new habitation.

¹³² Nahimana, Ibid. p.87.

¹³³ D'Hertefelt, op.cit. pp.22/3.

¹³⁴ Se Chapter III.3.5.

¹³⁵ Ferdinand Nahimana was a key figure in the ideology of the genocide. See Chapter five.

¹³⁶ Nahimana, F., *Rwanda.Emergence d'un Etat*, Paris: L'harmattan, 1993, P.64.

We are of the opinion that the clan as a social organisation, a unifying factor has been overshadowed by the spirit of the colonially oriented ethno-historical studies characterised by F. Barth as 'ascribed boundaries'¹³⁷. The concept was gradually abandoned and replaced by the notion of ethnic group with the intention of setting up the mechanisms of race supremacy benefiting one group over the rest.

However, this erroneous interpretation was given further support by some indigenous elite including Father Kagame, from the 1940s onwards. Without scientific arguments, Kagame would argue for the clan to be exclusively of Batutsi origin. He suggested that the presence in the clans of the Bahutu and Batwa attested by all researchers, resulted from their assimilation to the Batutsi through social, economic and political relations. This appears to be a deliberate bias deviating the concepts of Mututsi, Muhutu and Mutwa from their socio-economic primal meaning to imbue them with a more political and ideological significance. It seems to be a deliberate bias because Kagame still admits unequivocally that these three concepts had originally a socio-economical meaning:

Il faut reconnaître que dans les zones orientales, centrales et centre-sud, les Bahutu et les Batutsi ont réalisé un métissage assez poussé. Il y avait, certes, le cas des relations extra-matrimoniales; mais la voie la plus courante était constituée, dans l'ancienne société, par le cas des Bahutu devenues propriétaires de gros bétail et qu'on appelait ibyihutur: les quittant-la condition de cultivateur et passant dans la catégorie politique des Batutsi. Ils prenaient femmes chez les Batutsi. Il y avait surtout le cas des Bahutu nommés par le Roi Préfets du sol (Abatware b'ubutaka) qui avaient le titre et le rang de chefs. Ils se mariaient parmi les Batutsi qu'ils précédaient alors en dignité. Il y avait enfin, le cas des Batutsi déchus de leur richesse bovine et qui étaient obligés de s'intégrer à la classe des cultivateurs. Ils mariaient désormais leurs enfants dans leur nouveau milieu social¹³⁸.

Equally, Kagame acknowledged the fact that there existed a high degree of mixture of the populations due to intermarriages. But then he drew a ideologically oriented conclusion defending a hypothesis of Hamite origin for all the clans, thus backing the process of 'racialising'; this led to a poignant comment of Father Muzungu endorsed by Prof. Mbonimana that the precedence given by some authors including Kagame to 'ethnic groups' over the clans had no other motive but racial ideology¹³⁹.

The ethnicising of the notions of Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa is a more or less political and ideological recent phenomenon. According to Reyntjens, the concept of Bahutu and Batutsi as antagonists, was introduced for the first time in 1917 in the legislation by the Resident's circular letter 791/A/53 who took all the Batutsi for Lords and cattle-owners, and all the Bahutu for subjects and agriculturists¹⁴⁰; the Hutu and the less wealthier Batutsi were subjected to a considerable number of requirements. From then on the process of group identity received a powerful political and intellectual justifications analysed in further sections.

¹³⁷ Barth, F., 1969; see also Amseell, J-L., "Ethnies et Espaces: Pour une Anthropologie Topologique". In Amselle, J-L & M'Bokolo, E., *Au Coeur de L'Ethnie. Ethnies, Tribalisme et Etat en Afrique*, Paris: Editions la Découverte, 1985, pp11-48. Akwuniba Nnoli., *Ethnic Politics in Africa*, Ibadan: Vantage Publishers, 1989.

¹³⁸ Kagame, A., *Le Code des Institutions Politiques du Rwanda Pré-colonial*, Bruxells, 1952, p.116 ff.

¹³⁹ Muzungu, "Ethnies et Clans". In *Cahiers no1*, Kigali, 1995, p.35.

¹⁴⁰ Reyntjens, F., 1985, p. 131.

To sum up this section, in the Rwandan context the three groups of human beings share numerous factors of integration making irrelevant the ethnological definition of ethnic group or race. F.Barth's, accurately defines ethnic group as "a category of ascription whose continuity rests on the perpetuation of boundaries and the codification constantly renewed of cultural differences between neighbouring groups"¹⁴¹. We must have in mind F. Barth's definition when we discuss the issue of ethnicity as opposed to relational harmony.

II.1.2. Relational Harmony

In addition to their belonging to common clans, the Banyarwanda shared a community of customs and traditions, a common language: the population coexisted in the villages, intermarried; experienced a social mobility (descending and ascending in social rank). They also shared the notion of life and death, the place of God and religion in their life and culture¹⁴².

This community of life was managed by what Karamaga calls 'relational harmony', described by Father Tempels, as 'Bantu Ontology', a logical complete system of universe, of people and things, of existence, life and survival. According to Tempels, this system rests on the principle of 'vital force'- body, breathe and shadow- which regulates the manifestation of the thinking, ideas and the universe under a metaphysical system which influences the religious, political, social and judiciary life¹⁴³. These notions are inter-connected with 'vital force' in a hierarchical order whose integrity must be respected: the Supreme God; the primary Fathers and the dead of the tribe; the living elders (chiefs and others); the inferior creatures (animals, vegetation and the rest of the ecology)¹⁴⁴. This relational harmony coherently regulated the factors of integration to prevent harm between the communities, between individuals and between human being and creation.

II.1.3. Cultural Unity

By language, people would identify themselves as belonging to a community of aspirations, meaning and interpretation. By language, in particular, the mother tongue, people share their very reality of the universe, symbolic, mythical, factual and transcendental. They can communicate their being, socialise and identify themselves vis-à-vis people of other groups, though people of the same group may not be able to communicate in the same language, nor those who communicate in the same language be identified with that particular group. Nevertheless, distinctive language has often been taken as a reference for belonging to a separate ethnic group.

In Rwanda, the Kinyarwanda language unites all the people who live within the borders of present-day Rwanda but also the former autonomous regions integrated from the beginning of

¹⁴¹ Barth, F., *Ethnic Boundaries*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1969, pp.14/15.

¹⁴² Muzungu, B., 1996; see also Karamaga, 1990,p.

¹⁴³ Tempels,P., *La Philosophie Bantu*, Paris: Présence Africaine,1949,pp. 23/4.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. p.42.

the century¹⁴⁵. Although the Kinyarwanda language has been the language of that millions of people and though it has given the name to the present territory of Rwanda, it must be clearly understood that this vast linguistic entity was much larger than the political entity now called Rwanda. People who lived in the vast area have had the same economic, cultural, and social structures though living under different political systems.

In the monarchy that covered the centre of Rwanda, the political organisation was an inegalitarian structure as mentioned below. The expansion of Rwanda in particular under king Rwabugiri, intended to correspond the political entity with the political organisation. The attempt to impose that unequal political structure was however far from being successful at the eve of colonisation. When Earl Gustav-von Gotzen crossed Rwanda from east to west to meet King Rwabugiri in Kageyo, in 1894, the country was still expanding¹⁴⁶.

If an ethnic group was really to be defined by reference to a configuration of elements like social organisation, religion, homeland and language in comparison with other groups, then all the Banyarwanda (Bahutu, Batutsi, Batwa) plus the population of Burundi (Bahutu, Batwa, Batutsi) and other regions mentioned above would constitute one ethnic group united by the Kinyarwanda culture. But we have already acknowledged F.Barth's definition of 'ethnic group' which I abbreviated as a category of ascription constantly renewed for ideological reasons. The question of how these peoples came to speak the same language though living under different political systems goes beyond the scope of this research.

II.1.3.1.Cultural Unity or Strengthening Lineage's Identity?

According to Gasarabwe¹⁴⁷, Rwanda was united under the *ubwenge* (intelligence, wisdom) of the Banyiginya princes who by their movements and the confinements of their troops in the rebellious regions, facilitated the ethnic mixtures through intermarriages; they politically unified the country. This mixture, however, according to him, did not prevent the development of an ethnic conscience which, on the eve of decolonisation was raised to racism even among people considered to be very 'westernised: the clergy'. Two other factors favoured the unification of the country, religion and the 'feudal university'¹⁴⁸.

The religion in which the representation of the universe was an essential aspect was not a separate institution as in the case of Christianity and Islam. It was rather, as Gasarabwe rightly put it, "part of the whole life, beliefs, manner of being, model of relationships between human beings and the elements"¹⁴⁹. Religion has an indisputable role of unifier. In the end of the ritual ceremony of the initiation to the cult of the heroes, *imandwa* which

¹⁴⁵ The satellite regions comprised the south-west of Uganda (Bufumbira), the west of Tanzania (Karagwe), the East of Congo-Zaire (Kivu); Burundi, though a historically separate state from Rwanda, the Kirundi, the language spoken by the population of that country, Bahutu, Batusi and Batwa, is identical to Kinyarwanda in the sense of the French spoken in France, and the French spoken in Québec.

¹⁴⁶ Nahimana, F., Op.cit. p.156.

¹⁴⁷ Gasarabwe, E., *Geste Rwanda*, Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1978.

¹⁴⁸ Gasarabwe, op.cit. p. 29.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid. p.48

concerned the Rwandans of the three groups except the Mwami, a pact was sealed between the 'godfather' and the 'disciple'. These would exchange presents, like bovine and food, develop solidarity into work and through the symbols of peace and prosperity.

The feudal school allowed young men selected among the Batutsi and some Bahutu families to grow up beside the great masters who would command them; they shared times, milieus and cultural contexts together. Gasarabwe was right to show that education in Rwandan society inculcated common factors to Bahutu and Batutsi by family authority and superior organisations. This view dismisses Sibomana thesis according to which education in society inculcated different values.¹⁵⁰ In fact, we see instead a high degree of integration in the social, cultural symbolisms and religious practices.

Under the Kinyarwanda cultural entity, a panoply of legends, myths, tales, proverbs reflected national cultural life into which was rooted social intercourse. Many among these myths and legends were collected by ethnologists, then missionaries including Pastor Johanssen, the founder of the Bethel Mission, 1907-1916 (Memoirs: 'Ruanda'). Maniragaba who referred to the collection as belonging to Mensching¹⁵¹ defends a theory of the 'lost fraternity'. The myths according to Maniragaba, pose the eternal problem of the Batutsi supremacy pretending that there was a brotherhood between Gahutu, Gatutsi and Gatwacoscologically and divinely defined and accepted by the Bahutu. The Bahutu, he argued, were the eternal losers. For him, the Batutsi have always opposed themselves to the fraternity. They dominated the Bahutu by the Ubuhake during four centuries; they asserted their foreign origin and colonialism on the Bahutu for nine centuries and later refused to recognise the 1959 revolution. Finally, the Batutsi organised the 1990's RPF/ Inkotanyi attack¹⁵².

One myth tells how God proved the perspicacity and patience of the ancestors of the three groups. Imana (God) created Gahutu (ancestor of Bahutu), Gatutsi (ancestor of Batutsi) and Gatwa (ancestor of Batwa) and a young girl. According to the myth, one day, God gathered them in a hut and confided them three pots of milk to test their patience. "Keep it and do not sleep", he told them; "I will come to check".

When God returned, He found out that the milk of Gahutu had evaporated and fell in his hands and that he had licked it. Then God told Gahutu: "I put your milk in your hands, you will cultivate and live upon your effort. You cultivate for the Mututsi, make nets, produce crops and other tools". God turned to Gatutsi and found that his milk had evaporated and diminished by a half; He told him "you will grow hundreds of cows, half of them will die and half survive". Turning to Gatwa, God found that, tired of running from hunting in the forest, the ancestor of Batwa wanted to sleep and drank the whole milk; God told him: "go and make pots, you then will beg toward Gahutu and Gatutsi, toward the monarch who will never refuse to give you something". Lastly, God turned to the young girl and found out that

¹⁵⁰ Sibomana, A., *Gardons Espoir pour le Rwanda*, Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1997, pp.129-134.

¹⁵¹ As Pastor Mensching has written later after Johanssen, the authorship must be attributed to the latter.

¹⁵² Maniragaba, B., op.cit. p. 80.

her milk had spilled on her bosom. God told her: "you will marry a Muhutu who will give you milk; you marry a Mutusi who will give you milk and you will marry the king to give you milk"¹⁵³.

These myths fixed the three groups into professional specialisation. Maniragaba restricts his comments to an ideological aspect, that is that the myth justified the Batutsi domination over the Bahutu. We must underline two other aspects often hidden in many of the comments: first, the myth raises the question of intermarriage between Bahutu and Batutsi to the very family of the monarch when God commanded the young girl to marry either a Muhutu, a Mututsi or the King. Different sources confirm this reality¹⁵⁴. It however left open the place of the Mutwa who has been the eternal forgotten, marginalised by the two 'brothers'.

Secondly, unlike Maniragaba's conclusions, the myths underline the dimension of fraternity and brotherhood; an imperative duty to care for the most vulnerable of all three, Gatwa, was assigned to the two brothers. The three belong to the same ancestor who actually utilises the milk to distribute without confining the roles as symbol of a new life. They were called instead to complement each other. In later developments however, we know that irrespective of all the evidence now available, the cows were associated with only the Batutsi.

In addition to these long tales the Rwandan oral tradition has proverbs referring to the three groups in negative and conflicting ways. A large repertoire has been collected by diverse authors and institutions¹⁵⁵. These aspects of culture have led some observers to conclude that there existed tension between social groups and eventually, a nascent ideology of supremacy in some circles which was resisted by the popular culture¹⁵⁶. The present author is of the opinion that there must have been a process of social constructs aiming to shape a group's identity. This culture which was unveiling at the eve of colonisation has become both an old and new loyalty and emerged as a political and scholarship variable during the 20th century.

Rumiya is right to point out that a racial ideology could not have sprung from the court and from the great chiefs grounds where most of these proverbs originated. There, the Bahutu, the Batutsi and Batwa gravitated all together. The use of pejorative proverbs, he rightly suggests, neither constituted an act of rejection nor of violence between the Bahutu and Batutsi groups. Jokes, tales, legends, myths exist in different cultures without constituting a racial issue. The emphasis put on such an aspect which, indeed, is not peculiar to Rwanda has been, in our sense, exaggerated for ideological reasons in the obsession of discovering differences between people. Rather, the codification, standardisation and reproduction of these

¹⁵³ Johanssen, E., *Memoirs. Rwanda, 1907-1916*. VEM. *Mbacire umugani...* See also Lestrade, A., *Notes d'ethnographie du Rwanda*. Brussels, 1972.

¹⁵⁴ See section II.1.1 above and chapter three, section of schools.

¹⁵⁵ Crépeau, P & Bizimana, S., *Proverbes du Rwanda*. Butare: INRS, publication no 19 and Tervuren: MRAC series no 8, Sciences humaines, 1979. Translation is ours.

¹⁵⁶ Higiyo, JMV., "Distorsions et Omissions dans l'Ouvrage 'Rwanda, les Media du Génocide'". In *Dialogue*, no 190, Avril-Mars, 1996, pp.160-178

differences as cultural models and historical sources, has constituted the crucial step into the racial ideology as discussed in further sections.

II.2. Divisive Factor: Inegalitarian Political Organisation

We have considered a number of common factors among the three social classes of the Banyarwanda. We now turn to discuss the other side of the reality, the development of an inegalitarian political system in the central Kingdom of Rwanda and the emergence within it of the social dynamics determined to shape a group's identity as means of the monopoly of political power.

II.2.1. Control of Political Power and Resources

From the 17th century, King Yuhi Gahindiro installed a regime of *ibikingi/Ibiti* or districts in which the king was represented on a triple basis: the chief of pasture, the chief of land and the chief of the armies. This structure was maintained by the *ubuhake* system described later in this work. Despite the many integrative factors analysed above, this structure reflected a hierarchical and unequal organisation that accumulated most of the wealth, land and cattle in the hands of the *Mwami* (monarch) and his subordinates. Roger Louis described how the accumulation of power and wealth in the hands of the *mwami* and his subordinates was evident:

All the land, theoretically, became the property of the mwami, the absolute and semi-divine sovereign, whose symbol of authority was the Kalinga (in Urundi the Karyenda), or sacred drum from which were hung the genitals of the enemies of Rwanda killed by the mwami. To the Mwami all subjects were obliged to pay tributes. The collection of these tributes was the responsibility of a complicated administrative hierarchy. Administratively below the Mwami was a council of ministers, *batware b'intebe*, below them the chiefs who governed the provinces, and beneath them the sub-chiefs. The Mwami was required to consult the *biru*, or council of guardians of tradition, for important decisions. Supreme judicial authority was vested in the Mwami, who delegated authority to courts composed of great chiefs, who in turn delegated authority to more local courts. In a similar way, the Mwami distributed land and cattle among his subjects, who in return administered regions, paid the tributes, and provided military services ...; this system of obligations and tributes descended from the Mwami to the most common farmer. Obligations were not usually to the same person; one might be bound to one chief for cattle, to another for land, and another for military service¹⁵⁷.

This tendency to monopolise the political power and resources described by Louis was pursued by King Rwabugiri in the second half of the 19th century. This monarch created a Rwandan empire in the interlacustrine region which reached its summit in the far north and the west of present-day borders. This imperial adventure, however must be separated from what Pottier wrongly considers as Rwabugiri's ethnicising of society by institutionalising physical differences and the *uburetwa* (corvée)¹⁵⁸. According to concordant sources, it is out of doubt that the majority of Batutsi were compelled to *uburetwa* like their fellow Bahutu by the ruling elites. In addition *uburetwa* was structured, institutionalised and generalised by colonial administration from 1924 on¹⁵⁹.

What has been also proved in recent discoveries, is that in many regards, Rwabugiri associated the three social classes, Bahutu, Batutsi, and Batwa to one degree or another with

¹⁵⁷ Louis, R, *Rwanda-Burundi. 1884-1919*, London: Oxford University Press, 1963, pp. 110/1.

¹⁵⁸ Pottier, J., "Representations of Ethnicity in Post-Genocide writings on Rwanda". In Igwaro, O (ed.), *Rwanda: Ethnic Hatred and Genocide*, London: ASEN, 1995.

¹⁵⁹ Reytnjens, 1985; Rumiya, 1992; Chrétien, 1985; Belgian Parliament, 1997.

the management of the institutions¹⁶⁰. This is confirmed by many scholars including Canon de Lacger, Father Kagame and Ntezimana. In fact, the administrative and political divisions of the country mentioned by Louis were called in Rwanda political terminology the *umunyamukenke* (chief of pasturage) and the *umunyabutaka* (chief of soils), *umugabe* (chief of armies). The late Rwandan historian, E. Ntezimana, supports a similar argument in his study on "social, political and administrative institutions at the end of 19th century". Ntezimana showed that King Rwabugiri ended the influence of the powerful royal lineages in recruiting his confidants and entourages in his multiple fiefdoms among the Bahutu and Batutsi¹⁶¹. This reasoning goes at the opposite of Pottier's thesis with regard to King Rwabugiri's responsibility in ethnicising society¹⁶².

But it is only when this political inegalitarian system was adopted by the colonial rulers and the missionaries and imposed on the rest of the country, as indicated below, that it accelerated the process of transforming the Batutsi social class into an ethnic group, the rulers, to the ongoing detriment of the peasants including the Bahutu, the less privileged Batutsi and the Batwa.

II.2.2. Cultural Justification of Control of Power

Among other instruments conceived by the system in the central Kingdom monarchy for the preservation of privileges and power were a panoply of codes and official literature. Different categories of elites: *Abatekereza*, *Abacurabwenge*, *Abasizi*, *Abisi*, *Abiru* have participated in creating the space in favour of the reigning Batutsi dynasty, the lineage of Bahindiro in the segment of the Banyiginya clan¹⁶³. Pre-colonial Rwanda had three major categories of

¹⁶⁰ Kagame gave some examples, chief Bikotwa, son of Bashakamba promoted by king Kigeli IV Rwabugiri; chief Nkiramacumu, head of the Inzirabwoba army who succeeded to the great Mututsi Nkundukozeze; chief Ruyange, commandant of the Abadasiganwa army stationed in Gisaka. Many Batwa have been awarded commandants of armies

Similarly the Batwa acceded to the army command. A great family of Basyete ennobled by the great Cyilima II Rujugira. One of his successors, chief Biganda detained numerous territorial commands until 1916 (in Bushiru where he was dismissed by the colonial administration). A list of 26 names of Batwa chiefs 'includes 14 communicated to Kagame by J. Maquet' who collected them from his research on the field. However, Kagame evoked the existence of some customs regulating the social relations between, on the one hand the Batutsi and Bahutu, and on the other, the Batwa which would neither allow the Bahutu and Batutsi's to eat or drink on the table nor share the pipe with the Batwa. These customs bipolarised the social relations. Kagame, 1952, pp.116-133.

¹⁶¹ Ntezimana, E., "Le Rwanda Social, Administratif et Politique à la Fin du Dix-Neuvième Siècle". In Honhe, G(ed.), op.cit, p.76.

¹⁶² Pottier, J., op.cit. pp.52.

¹⁶³ They constitute the patrimony of oral sources. Referring to the work of Vansina: *evolution of the kingdom of Rwanda, from beginning to 1900*: 1962; 'Coupez and Kamanzi: *historic narrative of Rwanda*: 1962; father Delmas, L., *Généalogie de la Noblesse du Rwanda*, Kabgayi, 1950; d'Hertefelt and Coupez: *the sacred kingdom of ancient Rwanda*, 1964; Father Kagame: *La poésie dynastique du Rwanda*, Brussels, 1951); see also Father Heremans, R., *Introduction à l'Histoire du Rwanda*, Kigali: Editions Rwandaise, 1971.

a. **Abatekereza. The memorialists.** The official genealogies were told by specialists who learnt them from their ancestors, parents, or neighbours. The texts were submitted to the official censure, thus subject to modifications. The collection was made by Fathers Pages, Kagame and Vansina from 1957 and 1960. The popular genealogy texts were less controlled than the other ones. The family genealogies in particular those referring to the Bahutu monarchs were precious as they provided aspects of the past not taken into consideration in the official genealogies.

b. **Abacurabwenge (genealogists)**, literally the creators of intelligence were specialists of genealogies and bibliographies of the monarchs and the queens. Their documents were the "legal foundation of the reigning

literature, the *dynastic, the pastoralist and warrior poetry*. The central themes in this poetry/literature were the cattle, the King and Karinga, the emblem-drum. In a section reserved to the army institution in his book Le Code des Institutions Politiques du Rwanda pre-colonial, Kagame described the military institution as the most coherent and inclusive political institution, the basic social organisation of pre-colonial Rwanda. The Mwami was invested with full title-deeds to all cattle; the latter served as the foundation of the Ubugake pastoral clientship contract that guaranteed the economic and social domination of the Batutsi over the non Batutsi population¹⁶⁴. Thus the code published during the period when the UN was pushing Belgium to operate political reforms with a view to reaching the autonomy of the colony was interpreted by some as giving an intellectual justification for the Ubugake system. Kagame wrote his book into 391 articles, in a form of legal codes, certainly intending to show that the structure had sufficient flexibility for its adaptation.

As an essential principle, Rwanda must be unified under a king of a unique dynasty, the Banyiginya. Being the "supreme patriarch of the parenthood", chief of armies, the king was equally supreme chief of the civil administration. In fact, in Inganji Karinga (the triumphant Karinga, the emblem drum of the dynasty, 1943), Kagame had attempted to show that the organisation of the army had a participatory character.

Like E. Ntezimana, Kagame shows that Rwabugiri's recruitment outside the lineages associated with the royal family has not been an exception to the rule. Without departing from his theory of Batutsi supremacy (see chapter three), Kagame, indicates that each Rwandan regardless of their social class and condition, including the king, belonged to a specific army unit through their parenthood¹⁶⁵. The armies were formed at the beginning of each new reign. Yet, for Kagame whose theses of 'Hamite- Banyiginya' supremacy were obvious, the spearhead of these armies, were the sons of the "hamite nobility, *intore*(those selected), who constituted the official professional warriors"¹⁶⁶ with whom were associated the Bahutu and Batwa as auxiliaries.

As the Ubugake institution has been targeted by outsiders as feudal, the code of the military organisation provided a ground to value the supremacy of an inclusive Banyiginya- Bahindiro 'political institution'. To run the economy each Muhutu was assigned manual activities in the

dynasty", thus subject to modification each time the succession was in question. The whole text was published by father Kagame in Inganji Karinga (1943).

C. Abasizi (poets). The poetry was transmitted in a fixed form, in the vocabulary of the tradition. First the dynastic poems referring to dead or living monarchs were kept by rhapsodic poets. The collection was made by fathers van Overschelle and Kagame from 1936. They give valuable details on contemporary events but eventually needed commentaries.

Abiru were the most important ritual councillors of the court. Their text called *ubwiru*, or 'esoteric code'. They were special councillors of the monarch in charge of the knowledge and application of all regulations regarding the acts, deeds and rites to be accomplished by the monarch. As the monarch has a divine character, these were influential personalities.

¹⁶⁴ Kagame, A., Le Codes des Institutions, p.116.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. pp. 116-133.

¹⁶⁶ The dynasty poetry is a corpus of 176 poems complete or fragments dictated to Kagame by more than 20 composers (!). It is divided into three parties: the military section with 197 articles, the pastoral with 133 articles and the administration of the population and territory comprising 21 articles.

royal or sub-chief residences. In addition, during the harvest, each individual family would provide Mwami with crops: beans, peas, sorghum through the Prefet of the soils. Whoever refused to execute such duties was exiled¹⁶⁷.

As such, the military organisation had closer links with the Buhake system. Although some authors have suggested that the Buhake was flexible,¹⁶⁸ a reflection made by three members of the Batutsi elite in 1948 showed that the Buhake was an odd practice, an exploitation of man by man, of the poor by the rich in which the clients were always the losers¹⁶⁹. But it is Nkurikiyimfura who highlighted the alienating character of the Buhake system. The client's life and belongings were alienated by the Shebuja (the patron). The latter would have the right over the property and cows of his client even those acquired through other sources different from clientship. This had a negative impact on the social relations between the Batutsi ruling class and the peasantry¹⁷⁰.

In 1941, the Superior Council of the Mwami tried to regulate the Buhake system in elaborating the "Contract of Ubugaragu". But instead of correcting, the new contract codified the injustices. The burden was still to be carried by the *mugaragu* (client: Bahutu and Batutsi of lower stratum). Article 1 defined the obligations of Shebuja: giving a cow and protecting his client without any other details about the kind of protection required. Rather, the official contract put higher the obligations to be rendered by the *mugaragu* (client); he would now provide many activities ranging in two categories, those called "facultative" and those designed as "obligations of services". All this would require most of the client time in the Shebuja's home¹⁷¹.

Papadopoulos remarks rightly the limit of such a "pastoralist civilisation, nomadic by origin, fixing a political theocratic organisation. Its intellectual ground was strained by the fact that it could only be fertilised by a limited number of models of existence reached by such a system¹⁷²". As we can see, the central theme of this literature was the glorification of the sacred royalty. The participatory character that sustains the work of Kagame is questionable; there was really little room for the population, most of them Bahutu and Batutsi of lower strata. This surely diminished the impact of the factors of integration.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. art. 354, p.125.

¹⁶⁸ Overdulse, C., *Le Défi des Pauvres*, Butare: Editions Faculte de Theologie Protestante, 1991. See also Rumiya, J., *Le Rwanda sous le Régime du Mandat Belge, 1919-1931*, Paris: L'harmatan, 1992.

¹⁶⁹ Ruhara, Rwamasirabo and Sendanyoye "Le Buhake, une Coutume Essentiellement Munyarwanda". In *Bulletin de Jurisprudence des Tribunaux Indigènes du Rwanda-Urundi*. Léopoldville, 1948, 16 année, no 8, pp. 245- 258 and No 9, pp. 261-265.

¹⁷⁰ Nkurikiyimfura, J.D., *L'Evolution du Bétail au Rwanda du 13 Siècle à 1958*, Paris: l'Harmattan, 1994. 119-140; 281-290.

¹⁷¹ Nkurikiyimfura, J.D. op.cit. pp.281-284. The activities included: *gufata igihe* (paying court); *kurarira* (night-watch); *kubaka inkike* (to build the enclosure); *l'ingishwa* (to offer cow for good humour to Shebuja); *l'umurundo* (to pay a cow during the regular presentation of the client cattle to shebuja); *l'indemano ou umunani* (to pay a cow for the constitution of the folks of a new married son of Shebuja)

¹⁷² Papadopoulos, T., *Poésie Dynastique du Rwanda et Epopée Akristique. Essai d'Etablissement d'une Notion de Temps Anthropologique*, Paris/London: Société d'éditions, Les Belles Lettres, Kegan, Paul, 1963, p. 18.

II.2.3. Karinga Drum: Symbolism of Royalty

Karinga was invested as an emblem-drum of the Banyiginya- Bahindiro dynasty lineage who reigned over Rwanda until 1961. Karinga was a myth, the incarnation of power, an object of veneration and prestige. Its significance overlapped political and cultural sectors. It had a supreme authority over the king and the queen. It had metaphysical properties, required sacrifices, honour and dignity and possessed a mystical personality. It was Karinga who reigned through the Mwami chosen by God¹⁷³. Thus, the country, the soil, the females (human and animals) were fertile due to the emblem-drum and the monarch. Its magico-religious character was associated with legal, political and social life.

An orchestra of drums was regularly played in its honour. It intervened in highly emotional affairs such as executions (Pauwels:1962). Other prominent drums were associated with Karinga as substitutes to prevent the vacancy as when it was taken by Nsibura, King of Bunyabungo (east of Congo-Zaire): Cyimumugizi (the sovereign is the maker); Kiragutse (the country is expanding); Mpatsibihugu (I conquer and dominate the countries). For that reason, the enemies of the country were sacrificed: it was believed that Karinga and its substitutes were decorated with the genital remains of the defeated monarchs (Pauwels,1962). For the polemicists, these victims were of Bahutu background, but for others, there was no detail on that. One of the points of polarisation later in 1950s between the conservative monarchists and the Bahutu reformers was the Bahutu leaders' insistence on abolishing Karinga and reforming the monarchy.

In fact, Karinga was one of the symbols of the monarchy, the mystification of a system which discriminated against large sections of the population. Yet, it was globally wrongly associated with the entire Batutsi community when the time came for the political reforms .

II.2.4. Religious and social Justification of Power Control

The desire for control of socio-political life was manifested in the tendency to exert control on the factors of daily social intercourse like religion, production and reproduction¹⁷⁴. The tendency in the ruling circles was to divinise both the power of the reigning dynasty and the monarch.

The religious justification of the control on power was manifested in the ritual initiation to the universalist and organised religious beliefs, the cult of *imandwa* heroes (practised in Rwanda, Burundi, West of Tanzania, east of Congo-Zaire and South west of Uganda). For some lineages, the ritual cult was an encounter between the three groups: Bahutu, Batwa and Batutsi recreated into Muhima (an eponym 'hamite hero'), Munyoro (labourer) and the Mutwa. As such, the ritual gave pre-eminence to the Munyiginya over the two other groups. On the one hand, it emphasised the marginal role of the Mutwa; on the other, it showed

¹⁷³ Gatwa, T.,1982 interview with Mgr Kagame in Butare, 1981; see also Father Pauwels: "Karinga, Tambour Enseigne, 1962.

¹⁷⁴ Rukebeshu, A., "La Valeur Communicative de la Culture Rwandaise et sa Réhabilitation". In Bus, T, and Gatwa, T., Culture et Communication Oecuménique. Geneva: WCC, 1987, pp 38-45.

Mashira, the last King of the Babanda Kingdom of Nduga whose population, Bahutu and Batutsi were defeated by the Banyiginya-Bahindiro dynasty. The ritual shows that the Babanda, both Bahutu and Batutsi were since then considered as Bahutu and would obtain no favour from the new rulers as opposed to other clans, i.e. Basinga which was allied with the Banyiginya¹⁷⁵.

According to Father Muzungu, the process of divinising the king started under Mibambwe III Sentabyo (1741-1746). The composer Semidogo, son of Gasegege composed a poem entitled: "the monarch is not a human being". The process was pursued under Rwabugiri towards 1855 when another composer, Singiyimbaga, son of Nyakayonga, produced a poem of the same tone as the first one. The idea that the monarch was not a human being was reinforced with the myth of origin which supported the belief that the Banyiginya dynasty descended from the sky. This myth bore an ideology for the power control based on religion; it was made to guarantee a theocratic reign¹⁷⁶. The Mwami was then a supreme sovereign, a super-Father of the families. Because of his supra-lineages and clans and his almost 'divine' character, he was not concerned by the religious cult mentioned above.

Another desire to control the daily reality and the survival of the population occurred in the domain of production. Production was a collective affair, familial and sacred. From the beginning of the agricultural process to the end, production was facilitated by community life and sustained by religious symbolisms. The production process was gradually falling into the hands of the royal household. Not only had they set up the structural hierarchisation for the control of the means of production (land, pastures, cattle, harvest: see Kagame above) but had also conceived a form of religious control.

The phenomenon of *Kuvukana imbuto* (to be born with seeds), which meant that the next king was to be born with the seeds in his hands, was part of such a desire for political, economic and religious power. *Kuvukana imbuto* was carefully organised by the Abiru. In the opinion of the present writer, the intention behind this was to ensure control of the means of production by the monarch as heavy tributes in crops and animals were paid by all the families at harvest. Religiously conceived, violation for refusing to pay the harvest (*imiganura*) would be more compelling to lineages; these feared that an unhappy mwami (monarch) who was considered as a deity would accurse any rebellious region or lineages.

Unfortunately, the Mwami failed to use this mythical role to alleviate the inegalitarianism. Because the inequality was required by God, the king couldn't change anything though he was considered as an appeal court of the poor¹⁷⁷. The risk of such a system was an arbitrary command with an unrestrained ruler. The individual was at the same time exploited and allegedly protected by society, i.e. through his clan and the king. Hence the monarchical

¹⁷⁵ Gasarabwe, op.cit. p.56.

¹⁷⁶ Muzungu, B., "Je ne suis pas Venu Abolir mais Accomplir", Kigali: Centre Saint Dominique, 1996, pp.151-153.

¹⁷⁷ Gasarabwe, E., op.cit. p. 44.

lineage and its intermediaries pushed their dominance to a higher degree, unquestionably, the divinisation of the regime and its incarnation, the King.

II.3. External Agents as Divisive Factors

From the end of the 19th century, external agents including German colonisers, and missionaries, Catholic and then Protestants arrived in Rwanda. For more than sixty years, society was governed by new factors different from most of its traditional values and principles. The drawing of boundaries which divided the populations of the same backgrounds into different colonial empires, the continuing caricature of the populations, different theories on races which were introduced in society, the process of christianising, all contributed to destroying the existing factors of ethnic integration.

II.3.1. Redefining Boundaries

The installation of the colonisers followed the cutting up and the parcelling out of the Africa Continent during the 1884 Berlin Conference chaired by the Prussian Chancellor, O. von Bismark. First, with regard to the Great Lakes region of Africa including the cultural zone covered by people of the Kinyarwanda language described above, the arbitrary boundaries established by the colonial powers had a negative impact. The Berlin Conference was followed by the 1910 Convention between Germany, Belgium and Britain. Rwanda was divided into three parts, to use Ndeshyo's terminology, the *German Rwanda*, the *Belgian Rwanda* and the *British Rwanda* ¹⁷⁸.

This division had devastating consequences from the 'ethnic' point of view. The same population was scattered into different principalities. First, the flexibility of geographical and cultural boundaries which facilitated the movement of the populations for social and cultural reasons was abolished. People were fixed into these new imposed boundaries. In what he called the Kivu-Mfumbiro crisis, Louis explored the effect of such an arbitrary division on the whole of central Africa in which the French, Portuguese, Belgians, Germans and British, were all involved and suggested that it had devastating consequences. This 'fraud' in which Rwanda lost half its territory ¹⁷⁹ added to the country's problems with regard to the shortage of land in an overpopulated territory where more than 95 % of the population were rural. This

¹⁷⁸ Ndeshyo Rurihose (Dean of the faculty of law in the University Kinshasa), "La nationalite de la population zairoise d'expression Kinyarwanda au regard de la loi du 29 juin 1981". In *Dialogue* no 192, pp. 3-32. Brussels: August-September 1996. Following the 14 August 1910 convention between the government of their majesties the king of Prussia, the king of Belgians, and the British empire, Rwanda was divided into three parts: -i. the *German Rwanda* (present day republic of Rwanda); ii. the *Belgian Rwanda* (the current regions of Rutshuru, Goma, Masisi and Idjwi isle); - the *British Rwanda* (current region of Bufumbira, district of Kigezi in Uganda).

¹⁷⁹ Bourgeois (former Governor of Rwanda), *Banyarwanda and Barundi*, Kabgayi, 1953, p.38. Quoted by Ndeshyo Rurihose, Op.cit. p.6.

Bourgeois wrote:

"suite aux accords internationaux de 1912, Yuhi Musinga (monarque of Rwanda), perdit des provinces entières ou l'on parlait le Kinyarwanda: le Bufumbira et le Kigezi passèrent aux Anglais tandis que les Belges recevaient le Jomba, le Bwisha (Rutshuru), le Kamuronsi (Masisi); en outre, la Belgique recevait encore l'île Idjwi, conquête de Rwabugiri, the king of Rwanda 1830-1865"

See also Browlie, I, 1979. *African Boundaries. A Legal and Diplomatic Encyclopedia*. p. 678. London: C. Hurst & cie/ University of California Press; see also Louis, Roger., 1963. *Rwanda-Burundi, 1884-1919*. London: Oxford University Press/Clarens Press, p.96.

shortage of land has caused despair and frustration in particular for young generations and made them vulnerable to the exploitation of the tensions among the population.

But by far the most damaging consequence would be the perpetual victimisation by the post-independence ethno-politicians of the populations of Kinyarwanda speakers who were caught in the territories that were now apportioned to Uganda and Congo-Zaire. These rulers who had no democratic ideal and who had no legitimacy have continuously promoted the ethnic tensions and relegated these populations to the status of second rate citizens. Clearly, the potentially manipulated 'ethnic tensions' of the recent years in the great lakes had been planted a hundred years ago. Unfortunately, this potential was exacerbated by the continuing caricaturing of the Batutsi and Bahutu by leading scholars among the colonialists and the missionaries.

II. 3.2. Stereotypes and Caricatures

From the early encounter of Rwandan society with the exterior, the country was given new boundaries by explorers. These boundaries were set up by the anthropologists and ethno-historians including missionaries with a background of race supremacy theories. According to I. Linden, the encounter between western civilisation and Rwandan society provoked a shock, not from Darwin, Lyell or Hegel but from missionaries who were the first anthropologists to describe Rwandan society. For him, from then on, the Europeans introduced the 19th century divisions of rulers and ruled. They described the society as a country of strange Semitics, Hamitics, aristocratic castes, giant conquerors and invaders. The 'Hamites' were considered as 'born-rulers'. All this, according to Linden was dressed in the ideology of Christian brotherhood from above¹⁸⁰. On the other side, were the 'indigenous Bahutu, 'agriculturalists', 'humble labourers', 'fearful' peoples.

Socio-economic boundaries were also created associating Rwanda to a "feudal regime similar to Middle Ages Europe". The populations were fixed into three different castes. Equally, the descriptions took the Hamite as intelligent people, born-rulers, courageous, virtuous and authoritarian who had government and defence as a duty¹⁸¹. They governed by 'hierarchical stratification'.

According to Maquet the hierarchical stratification based on the supremacy of the Batutsi over the Bahutu and Batwa developed in two ways. On the one hand, the Batutsi's warrior capability, their intelligence combined with the distribution of the cattle products¹⁸². For this author his thesis was also valid for Rwanda, Burundi, Ankole (south Uganda) and Buha (east Tanzania), Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa were 'castes' because they had distinctive physical and psychological characteristics, grouped in sub-cultures with myths, diet, housing, clothing,

¹⁸⁰ Linden, I., Church and Revolution in Rwanda, Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1977, pp.4,5,6.

¹⁸¹ Davidson, B., Africa in History, London, 1978, p.150ff. See also Maquet, J., Maquet, J., The premises of inequality in Rwanda: a study of political relations in a central Africa kingdom (Translated from French). London: Oxford University Press, 1961, p. 146-161

¹⁸² Maquet, J., Power and society in Africa, 1971, p.171.



domestic social life and practised endogamy. Thus the divisions of society ranked in an order of inferiority/superiority which has been reinforced by colonial powers and the Church. Hasting pursues the same reasoning when he asserts that the Bahutu and Batutsi differ in height, possession of cattle and diet¹⁸³.

Obviously, Maquet is right to emphasise the stratification hierarchy which created a dichotomy within the relational harmony described above. He is right also to underline the role of colonialism and Christianity in reinforcing and promoting the inequalities. Yet, his analysis implicitly rests on a primordialist hypothesis of stratified hierarchy which as many monographs on various regions of the country have shown, was not fully generalised (see chapter 1). His hypothesis of ethnic binary opposition coincides with the obsession to search for and promote the differences by a rather hypothetical description of the 'caste' as having psychological characteristics¹⁸⁴.

In fact many scholars have come to see the inaccuracy of using the notion of caste outside the Indian context where it has not only a social and economic but a philosophical and religious significance. In many regards, these physical characteristics rehearsed in the diverse interpretations of the recent tragic events, have been used to put the blame on the traditional social and political organisations. Balandier says the same thing in the interview mentioned above but with certain nuances; he adds an argument that is missing in Hasting's analysis: that of the nature of the responsibility of the colonial policies.

Balandier had insisted on the disastrous consequences of the measuring of the population, the systematic grouping of the population with identity cards referring to ethnic origin defined along arbitrary criteria, a process which has been recently acknowledged in the report of the Parliament of the former colonial power, Belgium¹⁸⁵.

Yet, another emeritus Professor of Ethnology, M. d'Hertefelt insistently referred the present writer to "the scientific studies of Hiernaux". In fact, the latter has proceeded to the blood test, and the measurements, out of which he arrived at the ridiculous conclusion that the Batutsi were, 1.79m, the Bahutu, 1.67m and the Batwa, 1.59. The Belgians colonial authorities relied on these studies which included also the weight, the nose width, the nasal index, the face height, the facial index for the three groups¹⁸⁶. But even if these measurements were reliable, the question if they would constitute a condition for people to necessarily belong to different 'races' is unanswered. D. Franche said that during the first Empire in France, Senators and Peers were measured at 1.74 whilst the conscripts were at 1.62. However, they were not classified as belonging to different races¹⁸⁷.

¹⁸³ Hasting, A., "Countdown to a bloodbath". In *The Tablet*, Vol. 250, No 8153, November 1996, p.1464.

¹⁸⁴ He later abandoned it. Cf. D'Hertefelt, M., *Les Clans du Rwanda Ancien. Elements d'Ethnohistoire et d'Ethnosociologie*. Tervuren, 1971, p.75.

¹⁸⁵ See Chapter III.6.3.

¹⁸⁶ Hiernaux, J., *Analyse de la Variation des Caracteres Physiques Humains en une Région de l' Afrique Centrale: Ruanda-Urundi and Kivu*, Tervuren: Musee Royale de l'Afrique Centrale, no 3, 1956, pp.34-60. See also D'Hertefelt,

¹⁸⁷ Franche, D., *Rwanda, Généalogie d'un Génocide*, Paris: Editions Mille et Une Nuits, p.12.

For Rwandans all over the land who know the reality of many Bahutu, Batutsi, Batwa who are taller and smaller; who knew many impoverished Batutsi who had no single cow nor even a goat and had to work for the Bahutu to earn their daily survival, this kind of scholarship is simply ridiculous and misleading. Partly, not only it is the question of extent of how many, or whether these were members of exceptions, but because the study itself fell in impasse when what were considered as exceptions were too many to be kept in such a category¹⁸⁸.

The second hypothesis regarding the Batutsi as invaders who would have brought the cows has also been questioned. The last archaeological discoveries in the land show that the cow was known in Rwanda before the supposed date of arrival of the Banyiginya. This was confirmed in 1983 by a group of Belgian scholars, including Marie-Claude Van Brunderbeek, Emile Roche and Hugues Doutrepoint in the publication of their findings entitled: "l'âge du fer ancien au Rwanda et au Burundi. Archéologie et environnement"¹⁸⁹.

Another area in which this 'caricaturing scholarship' of colonisers and explorers converges with the missionaries' thinking is in the description of the religious and cultural values of the indigenous populations discussed in chapter three.

II.3.3. Transposing Racial Inequality

The impact of the Hamite myth as a key factor in the thinking and behaviour of the missionaries is discussed in the next chapter. But to anticipate the debate on the issue it is best to have in mind two aspects: First, the Hamite myth has been prevalent in anthropological scholarship which influenced explorers, colonialists and missionaries from the end of the 19th century in the interlacustrine region of Africa. Second, the development of the myth corresponded to the theories of race inequality which have been applied in Europe and damaged the social harmony there as in for example France or Germany. The Hamite myth was, indeed, that central piece needed in the colonial expansion within the Great Africa region¹⁹⁰.

Ali Mazrui analysed and placed such considerations in the perspective of the "European expansionism that went back to the Greeks and their immediate successors", the Graeco-Romans and the Judeo-Christian world. For him, two forms of Europeanism had inculcated two attitudes among the Africans. First, the Judeo-Christian sense of sacred superiority contributed to the birth of Ethiopianism and African syncretism whilst the Graeco-Romanism arrogance had contributed to the birth of Negritude. This forced the Africans into a position of 'cultural defensiveness'. Mazrui concludes then that by defending the thesis of a Eurasia - Mediterranean Hamite - Semite civilising race on the continent either by blood or culture, some ethnologists, primarily, G.C.Seligman, concede perhaps unconsciously what other

¹⁸⁸ Chrétien, J-P., 1993.

¹⁸⁹ Muzungu, B., "Ethnies et Cans au Rwanda". In *Cahiers du Centre St Dominique*, No 1, 1995, p. 19-51.

¹⁹⁰ Franche, D., op.cit. pp.32/33.

ethnologists deny to Africa: the existence of a deep symbiosis of cultures among many nations of the world¹⁹¹.

Applied to the context of Rwanda, the persistent search for the superior and inferior race, the search for differences between the 'races' was appalling; it ended in creating a historical resentment perpetuating a binary opposition. When the Belgians took over from the Germans, they carried on the race differentiation strategy and elaborated it more fully. From 1925 the colonial administration reports include an extensive description of the 'races' in a chapter called 'race policy'. The Batutsi were described as having no physical resemblance with the Bahutu except for 'some aliens' of impure blood.

Les Batutsi sont un autre peuple. Physiquement ils n'ont aucune ressemblance avec les Bahutu, sauf évidemment quelques déclassés dont le sang n'est plus pur. Mais le Mututsi de bonne race n'a, à part la couleur, rien de nègre. Les caractéristiques physiques "rappellent de façon troublante le profil de la momie de Ramsès II. Les Batutsi étaient destinés à régner...D'où viennent ces conquérants? Ils ne sont pas Bantu, cela est bien certain. Mais leur langue est celle du pays, nettement bantoue, sans trace d'infiltration quant à leur origine¹⁹².

For the authors of this colonial administration report, the Bahutu and Batutsi belonged to different races. Like the German Governor, the issue of cultural unity in particular the Common language purely 'Bantu', remains for them, a mystery; they faced an undisputed reality, the 'ethnic integration' of the population, but persisted in speculating on an eventual 'race' difference in evoking "les déclassés dont le sang n'est plus pure". The convergence of opinion of explorers, missionaries and colonisers in relation to the philosophy expressed in this passage is highlighted by the editors themselves. Father J.M.van der Burgt, the colonial administration report states, located their origin in India. Their physical characteristics relate them to Masai, Ethiopian and ancient Egyptians. But according to the Batutsi themselves, "they believe they arrived in the country at the same time as the Bahutu". Both the French priest, Del Perugia and a former colonial administrator, O. Marchal in two separate vindications of the Hamites mentioned above, two decades after the independence, reproduced in exact similar themes the colonial and ethnologic theories originating the Batutsi 'conquerors' in the plateaux of Tibet from where they drove their cattle, across India and Persia and into the valleys of Mesopotamia eventually arriving in Ethiopia as both their promised land and apportionment.¹⁹³

However, the 1926 colonial report also acknowledged that there existed many common characteristics and customs among the Banyarwanda and among the Barundi¹⁹⁴; visibly, the authors of the report were really much at pains to discern why. They then concluded that both Banyarwanda and Barundi were the same race which divided into distinct groups called Mututsi (singular of Batutsi) and Muhutu (singular of Bahutu) or Mutwa (singular of Batwa).

Pour les Banyarwanda, le terme Mututsi n'implique pas nécessairement un caractère racique (sic) pur: il détermine plutôt une situation sociale et l'on pourrait citer plusieurs familles considérées actuellement sans contestation comme Batutsi, mais descendant d'un ancêtre Muhutu, voire même Mutwa, ennobli

¹⁹¹ Mazrui, A., *Political values and the educated class in Africa*, London, 1978, p. 93.

¹⁹² Administration coloniale., *Ruand-Urundi. Bruxelles: report administration*, 1925. pp. 34/5).

¹⁹³ Perugia, P., op.cit.p.37. See also Marchal, O., *Afrique africaine*, Paris: Fayrad, 1983

¹⁹⁴ Administration coloniale, Report, 1926,p.50

jadis pour des services exceptionnels rendu au Mwami... Le métissage des Batutsi et Bahutu est fréquent, non seulement par relations clandestines, mais encore par union légitime...¹⁹⁵

The colonial administrators, who were the authors of the report had evidence of Batutsi, Bahutu and Batwa concepts being social categories, "terme Mutusi n'implique pas nécessairement caractère racique (sic)... plutôt une situation sociale'. In fact this was an 'uncomfortable' discovery; the authors persist in maintaining that the Batutsi have inborn qualities of leadership. At the same time however, the Batutsi were described as being marked by the spirit of 'ferocity', 'intrigue' and 'tendency for domination'".

Le Mutusi du Rwanda est, d'autre part, comme son voisin du Burundi, doué des qualités qui font le chef. D'intelligence vive, souvent d'une délicatesse de sentiments qui surprend chez les primitifs, ayant au plus haut point le sens du commandement, possédant un extraordinaire empire sur lui-même et sachant sans effort se montrer bienveillant, le Mutusi de bonne souche s'impose tout naturellement au Muhutu qui fermera les yeux sur les défauts (du Mutusi) qui en sont le revers: l'arbitraire, l'arrivisme féroce, la passion de l'intrigue et l'esprit de domination absolue¹⁹⁶.

Regardless the above evidence of common factors, the authors still affirm that, only the Mutusi of Rwanda and his neighbour of Burundi, have "inborn qualities for leadership"; such a statement, in the view of this thesis, is part of the obsession to have a society of superior and inferior, good and bad people.

Various other views and perceptions have been presented as to whether the Bahutu and Batwa have not had socially and politically credible institutions. Canon de Lacger in his research, *Le Rwanda ancien*, though partisan to the Hamite supremacy theory, has shown that the Batutsi Banyiginya borrowed the social and political institutions from the existing monarchies¹⁹⁷. Nevertheless, a series of economic, political and cultural measures have been introduced to reinforce the capacity of the ruling class as trustworthy auxiliaries in the management of the colony. The following paragraphs consider how those policies developed the feeling of belonging to two separate identities.

II.3.4. Imposition of Colonial Reforms

Through concepts, policies, attitudes, descriptions, the colonial administration, German and then Belgian, have defined what they had called 'race policy'. The German colonial policies were by far the most marked by the first Governor, Dr Richard Kandt. A distinguished Geographer and Anthropologist, Kandt wanted to apply his own discoveries in the definition of the colonial policies.¹⁹⁸ Kandt, like his contemporaries, wanted to keep a hierarchical stratified society. Honke puts it as follows:

En ce qui concerne l'organisation administrative Kandt pensait conserver l'appareil de pouvoir royal dont les structures complexes ne correspondaient pas aux besoins d'une administration rationnelle et lui adjoindre une composante rendant aux exigences allemandes. Il prévoyait de choisir dans chaque unité administrative une personne spécialement qualifiée parmi les responsables traditionnels pour lui faire assurer en outre les fonctions d'un représentant du gouvernement¹⁹⁹.

¹⁹⁵ Idem. Report, 1926:50/1.

¹⁹⁶ Administration Coloniale Ruanda-Urundi, *Rapport 1926*, p.50

¹⁹⁷ Franche, D., op.cit. pp46 ff.

¹⁹⁸ Honke, G., "Pour l'Empereur et le Roi. L'Etablissement de la domination coloniale allemande". In Honke et al. Op.cit. p. 120.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid. p.120

This position of the German colonial administration with regard the keeping of the hierarchical structure of the central core Kingdom and even to choose within the dominant class the representatives of the colonial power, was espoused as seen above by the Belgian colonial administration.

From 1916 when the Belgians took over²⁰⁰ and succeeded the Germans, the colonists and missionaries developed a close collaboration in which the Catholic Church became more privileged while the Protestant were merely tolerated. Firstly, to affirm their authority, the Belgian administration would now rely on the Catholic missionaries rather than on Protestants. This happened because, on the one hand, Belgium is mostly Catholic and most of the colonial authorities were recruited within the catholic political parties; and on the other hand, the Catholic missionaries were believed to have been acquainted with the country and its inhabitants and had a working knowledge of the realities of life in this colony. Thus, to elaborate and implement the 'race policies' the Belgian administration ordered a reflection from the White Fathers on Rwanda. Fathers Arnoux, Hurel, Pages, Schumacher prepared anthropological treatises to underpin the Belgian policies of adaptation. The document which was drawn up in 1916 by R.P. Classe, head of the Catholic Church in Rwanda, had a widespread readership²⁰¹.

Not surprisingly, it reflected the presupposition of race supremacy which would remain the core line of the ecclesial authorities in judging and characterising society. According to the document, Rwandan socio-political system was similar to the feudal regime of the Middle Ages. The authority was held in theory by the Mwami (King) Musinga, but in reality it was the Queen mother who ruled. The country was divided into small regions with rival chiefs (Bahutu and Batutsi) in particular in Nduga where powerful chiefs competed for the royal privileges. Mgr Classe recognised that the Bugoyi, Kinyaga, Budaha, Gisaka, Kingogo, Bushiru were not subordinate to the central Kingdom²⁰².

The tributes paid to Mwami and chiefs - chiefs of lands and pastures- mainly by the Bahutu- *ikoro ry'ubutaka, amararo*, etc.- were the pivot of the political institutions and were lucrative for the intermediaries. The social structure was the Buhake whilst the social organisation was the armed militia and the ethnic groups were known as the Batutsi, Bahutu and Batwa. Classe said however, that any owners of cattle and privileges, were considered as Mututsi²⁰³ whilst in "the Mulera region anyone from the Nduga (centre and south) region was called Mutusi"(sic)²⁰⁴.

The documentations consulted, particularly the colonial administration reports, 1922-1959, the missionary reports and in particular, the scholarship of Prof. Reyntjens including his

²⁰⁰ Ruanda-Urundi were officially handed to Belgium in the Versailles's treaty which distributed the Germany's colonies to the victorious powers in 1919.

²⁰¹ Rumiya, J., Op.cit. p.133.

²⁰² Ibid. p. 134.

²⁰³ The document suggested there were 20.000 Batutsi and 2.000.000 Bahutu!

²⁰⁴ Rumiya. Op.cit.133-137.

doctoral thesis in law²⁰⁵ and the December 1997 report of the Belgian Parliament on Rwanda, show that the colonial reforms of the 1920s and 1930s had several aspects that reflected the clergy's influence. From the Political aspect: there was a desire to enforce a new charter order having at the top the King of Belgium, then the Minister of the Colonies in Brussels, the Governor General of Congo, Ruanda- Urundi in Leopoldville (Kinshasa); Vice-Governor of Ruanda-Urundi in Bujumbura, the Governor (Resident) of Rwanda in Kigali and only in sixth position, the King of Rwanda.

The reforms included the unifying integration of several small chiefdoms. In that process several traditional Bahutu monarchies disappeared.²⁰⁶ In addition the triple chiefdoms in which the king was represented in the territory by the chief of lands, the chief of pasturage and the chief of armies were joined and subsequently had a single chief nominated by the administration. This administration was essentially dominated by authorities of Catholic confession. The reforms also included forcing King Musinga to sign the bill of religious freedom as well as to nominate young literate Batutsi who graduated from the schools for sons of Batutsi chiefs. The social aspect of the reforms comprised among other things the attribution of an identity card referring to their ethnic origin. According to Luc de Heusch, arbitrary criteria were taken into consideration to differentiate the population. It was by owning either large herds of cows or by your physical measurements or by oral information that the administration deemed you Bahutu or Batutsi.²⁰⁷

It was planned that the *Buhake* system would be gradually transformed and disappear²⁰⁸. But instead, in 1924 it was reinforced in the codification of the *uburetwa* (forced labour) custom by the colonial administration. According to various sources the *uburetwa* (corvées) were extended to the rest of the country by the colonial administration though reduced gradually from 142 (traditionally a week had five days) to 42 days per year. The fact that some wealthy people or elite were allowed to pay the counterpart of *uburetwa* in currency underlined the injustices against the poor²⁰⁹; the peasantry (Bahutu and Batutsi) were compelled to the activities of public interest without being liberated from numerous obligations in the residence of the chiefs. It was in that period that the cash crops like coffee were introduced to generate income and to initiate a cash economy. To achieve such a programme the population was submitted to heavy coercion, including physical punishments carried out by chiefs and sub-chiefs who then became unpopular. In addition, the taxes introduced in 1914 by the Germans were reinforced and extended to individuals and cattle.

²⁰⁵ Reyntjens, F., *Pouvoir et Droit. Droit Public et Evolution Public au Rwanda de 1916-1973*, Tervuren: MRAC, No 117, 1985.

²⁰⁶ Administration coloniale Ruanda-Urundi, *Rapports 1927 & 1928*.

²⁰⁷ De Heusch, L., "Rwanda. Responsibilities for Genocide". In *Anthropology Today*. Vol 11, no 4, August 1995, p.4.

²⁰⁸ Rapport Administration coloniale Ruanda-Urundi, report, 1927, p. 37.

²⁰⁹ Reyntjens, 1985; Overdulve, 1991; Rumiya, 1992, p.136

The reforms aimed at transforming the traditional rulers, including the king and the chiefs, into bureaucrats paid with taxes collected by themselves through the population. Consequently this caused resentment within the peasantry whose destiny was set to deteriorate progressively in the years to come.

II.3.5. The Fate of the Masses

All these measures created what C. Attenbury calls the 'cumulative impact', or the package of the actions that exacerbated the frustrations, rancour of the population and became the catalysts of the 1959 Revolution. There were among other things, the introduction of the market economy, taxes, cash crops and the exploitation of the mines even the Church under Mgr Classe introduced a Church tax of 1F per adult²¹⁰. The colonial authorities were led to institutionalise the forced labour. All these measures left the populace in precarious conditions.

In fact, although the peasants who were Christianised in theory were freed from their shebuja (patrons) obligations, it was to be subjugated by the priests who also behaved as patrons. According to Linden: "conversely the Hutu also thinking in terms of patron-client relationships, treated the Fathers as their new preferred Abanyabutaka, paying them against the Abatware... The Fathers treated their Hutu as Garagu rather than tenants, whilst the Tutsi made valiant efforts to come to terms with idiosyncratic views of property"²¹¹. Clearly, the Church contributed to worsening the conditions of the peasantry. The destiny of the 'Hutu masses' disintegrated irreversibly.

Then there were taxes called Minimum Personal Contribution paid by each adult male, whether or not he earned. This led to arbitrary arrests and the expatriation to the British colonies of those incapable of paying. Almost 50.000 per year or one out of six male adults were exiled²¹². In response to this injustice, Lemarchand wrote that: "the destiny of the Bahutu masses was considerably worse under the Belgian administration than ever before". Linden accurately notices that the colonial authorities, the White Fathers, the Court and the ruling class were all competing for one commodity Rwanda could supply in abundance, the labour of the peasantry²¹³.

II.3.6. Mutual Devotion of Colonial and Religious Powers

The colonial reforms were conceived, and applied by the coalition of the Catholic hierarchy and a colonial administration. For most observers Belgium as 'colonial power' has transferred to its colonies most of the divisions of its society. Her study identifies one of these divisions as being the difficult equilibrium between the political parties in Belgium. The majority of the authors who studied the colonial period, including A.des Forges, Reyntjens and Feltz

²¹⁰ Linden, I., op.cit. p. 196.

²¹¹ Ibid. p.98.

²¹² Reyntjens, 1985, p.141.

²¹³ Ibid. p.104.

unanimously acknowledge the fact that all the authorities were pressured directly or indirectly to convert to Catholicism as explained in the next chapter²¹⁴.

Equally, religious affiliation of the colonial authorities has been one of the factors that enhanced the alliance between the Catholic Church and the colonial government. These authorities from the Minister of colonies, the Governor General of Congo and Ruanda-Urundi based in Leopoldville, the Governor of Ruanda-Urundi who had his office in Bujumbura, the Resident of Ruanda who lived in Kigali, were carefully selected from among the Catholic parties in Belgium and have been with few exceptions fervent adherents, as was the Mwami of Ruanda in Nyanza. From 1948 to 1951 all these authorities belonged to the Catholic political Parties, except Resident Sandart, liberal (1948 to 1950), Minister Buisseret, Socialist (1954-1958) and Vice-Governor Harroy, Liberal (1950 to 1959)²¹⁵. The religious affiliation can not be a neutral subject in the formation of a "Christian Kingdom in Central Africa".

The "catholicising of the King and the chiefs" against which Protestant missionaries have had to protest more than once, can not be perceived as a matter of Catholic clergy putting pressure on the colonial administration. There might be a great sympathy from the civil servants and the politicians towards the Church to which they belonged. These were backed up by the young Batutsi chiefs selected, educated and nominated with the sponsorship of the missions. The personnel of the colonial administration she asserts were mainly recruited under the Catholic political parties, a point which is confirmed by Father Theunis²¹⁶. The colonial representatives put it as follows:

Les délégués du Résident du Rwanda sont unanimes à affirmer l'excellence de la méthode consistant à recourir à la coopération de jeunes Batutsi lettrés, ceux-ci réussissant rapidement, grâce à leur vive intelligence et à leur remarquable esprit d'assimilation à adapter sans heurt le point de vue de l'administration à la mentalité indigène²¹⁷... The report then says: "Le programme des réformes destinées à améliorer la situation sociale de la population- programme élaboré antérieurement a été appliqué méthodiquement et complété par diverses mesures d'exécution qui peuvent se résumer comme suit:

- les agissements de chefs ont été étroitement surveillés;
- les indigènes Batutsi and Bahutu qui n'ont obtenu un commandement qu'en abusant la crédulité superstitieuse du Mwami ou des grands chefs - faiseurs de pluie, sorciers et devins- ont été déposés et remplacés par de jeunes Batutsi lettrés, anciens secrétaires indigènes.²¹⁸

The "young literate Batutsi" were in fact the products of the missionary schools, the sole operating in the country. The summary of the reforms completed as made by the administrators, included the dismissal of both the chiefs Batutsi and Bahutu from the traditional and political entities judged as having earned their position through 'intrigue and divination'. The disappearance of the Bahutu chieftaincies, or monarchies in the new political

²¹⁴ Out of 69 chiefs, 54 were Catholics and 15 pagan; out of 900 sub-chiefs, 781 were Catholics and 119 pagan. In 1938 there were 56 chiefs: 51 were Catholics, 5 pagan; 860 sub-chiefs of whom 726 were Catholic, 21 Protestant, 5 Adventist and 108 pagans. In 1947, out of 51 chiefs, 48 were Catholic, 2 Protestant and 1 pagan; of the 625 sub-chiefs, 555 were Catholics, 42 Protestant, 9 Adventist and 19 pagan. G. Feltz., "considérations sur l'histoire contemporaine du Rwanda". In RFEP A, 1971, no 69, p.76-97. Quoted in Reyntjens, 1985, p. 125.

²¹⁵ Adapted from Reyntjens, 1985, p.183.

²¹⁶ Theunis, G., "l'Eglise Catholique et les Evenements Recents au Rwanda". In Guichoua, op.cit. p. 299.

²¹⁷ Rapport administration coloniale Ruanda-Urundi, 1927, p 63.

²¹⁸ Ibid. 68.

panorama which needs further discussions, has been an episode which sadly highlights the responsibility of the Catholic Church in the polarising of society²¹⁹. This section of the colonial administration report however, does not mention explicitly the Christianisation of a young Batutsi generation and the collaboration of the Church with the colonial power but in reality it is what lies behind. The young literate Batutsi whom the colonial administration needed was educated in the missionary schools; the nomination and the revocation of the chiefs were always made with the co-operation of the local clergy. The comments also indicate on one hand a disdain of the established procedures of delegating authority in Rwanda society, and on the other, it shows, to what extent the exclusion of the old guards of Batutsi and Bahutu chiefs, were placed in the search for a Christianised young Batutsi generation. The reforms sealed in a negative way the destiny of the peasantry and accelerated the potential for the 1950s explosion. Another dimension of these reforms was the impact of the imposition of the Batutsi on formerly autonomous regions of Rwanda.

II.3.7. Rulers Imposed Provoked Resentment

One of the key measure in the colonial reforms of 1924 to 1935 was the imposition of the regime of Musinga over the formerly autonomous regions which had been under the leadership of the traditional clan chiefs. In fact, the process started under the Germans in 1911 and continued under the Belgians. The colonial authorities decided either to suppress those monarchies, or to integrate them with others and to nominate over them young chiefs from the central monarchy in Nyanza. The Church provided both the education of 'young literate Batutsi' and also the necessary assistance in their recruitment and installation as indicated in the quotation at the previous page.

This episode left society with many unhealed wounds. One of these fractures which has been largely present in the Rwanda tragedy was the fracture of society on the line Bakinga (northerners - Banyandunga (the rest, particularly, the central and southerners). Catherine Attenbury considers that the colonisers (Germans and then Belgians), through arbitrary and repressive use of the Batutsi rulers from the central core area in the satellites and frontier regions have created a "cumulative impact" and the resentment that exploded in the 1959 revolution²²⁰.

Assessing the 1925 events, the colonial administration report praised the "completion of the reforms of the political administration" on the country from 1916. Prominently mentioned, was the control and at the same time, the reinforcement of traditional authorities; the imposition by force of the authority of Musinga in the "Busozo and Bukunzi provinces,

²¹⁹See chapter three, section 4.1; Reyntjens, 1985, p.104; Lemarchand, 1970,p.85.

²²⁰ Like Canon de Lacger, Pauwels and others, Attenbury shows that Rwanda pre-colonial was not unified. It existed in three regions: a. a central core; the satellite regions and the frontier regions. In the central core, the system rested on the Mwami, Abiru, a centralised triple administration of chiefs of land, cattle and armies who represented the king around the country; then the ubuhake system.

Shangugu which were governed by a Bahutu family, maker of rains", and in "Bushiru-Chingogo, where the authority of the Bahutu monarch was ended in 1924"²²¹.

The Local populations protested against this violation of their sovereignty which started under the German rule but were heavily repressed. According to Louis²²², several revolts emerged in the south, south west and the north early in 1910s. In the north a certain Ndungutse²²³, together with Bilegeya another son of Rwabugiri with Nyiramuhumuza and chief Mutwa, Basebya, succeeded in mobilising both Bahutu and Batutsi. The revolt had some success in the Buberuka, Buyoga, Kabaya, Ruhondo, Kibari and Bumbogo regions while open resistance was noticeable throughout the country. The German Governor ad interim, Gudovius moved quickly not only to stop the opposition against Musinga, but to prevent "the Ndungutse movement from inciting a revolution of the Hutu against Tutsi". Captain Godovius organised a punitive expedition against the insubordinate districts. He committed his troops to:

causing the greatest possible damage until complete submission; otherwise, destruction of crops and settlements, and occupation of the theatre of operations by chiefs appointed by the Resident who are faithful to Musinga. Gudovius entered the village- *where Ndungutse had retreated*- and his escort fired continuously, killing about fifty people. Most of the villagers attempted to break out of the circle of surrounding soldiers; most were slaughtered. Ndungutse himself was killed during the fighting. Gudovius burned the village; nothing was left but ashes... the Chief Lukara- murderer of Father Loupias in Rwaza- was executed after summary proceedings on 18th April for the murder of Father Loupias; the Twa Basebya was shot on 15 May. The result of the Ndungutse expedition, however, was a strengthening of authority of the mwami and the German administration. The sultan expressed his thanks to the Residency through a special delegation and the presentation of a great elephant tusk. Godovius reported after the expedition that the administration could continue to count on the 'complete loyalty of Musinga' and could be assured that he would try to fulfil every wish of the Resident²²⁴.

This punitive expedition aimed, in the words of Capt. Gudovius, "to end one for all the revolts in the north" against the authority of Mwami Musinga. That it reached its ends is questionable. But at least, it left behind many victims among the local populations, serious damages to their belongings and created a resentment.

In his acrimonious attack against the Batutsi, Nahimana describes what he calls the "conscience of the Rwandan masses" which played a role in the defence and the extension of the kingdom²²⁵. Obviously his 'mass conscience' was part of his campaign in the 1990 mobilisation against the Batutsi and their 'accomplices'. In chapter VI of his book he presents what he calls the colonial-missionary military operations for imposing the Batutsi chiefs in the north and north-west. For him, the operations crystallised the tensions. The German troops accompanied by the warriors of chief Rwubusisi crossed the region, from Bushiru to Bugoyi, Buhoma, Bwanamwali, Bukonya and Bwimba.

These regions were the theatre of fighting. The crops were devastated and the houses destroyed. They arrested and killed chief Basebya and Ndungutse. Some of the consequences were famines which affected the region in the following years. Nahimana enumerated almost

²²¹ Rapport administration coloniale Ruanda-Urundi, 1925, p.64/5.

²²² Louis, R., op.cit. p. 155.

²²³ Son of Rutarindwa (killed in the Rucunshu putsch that installed on power his half-brother, Musinga).

²²⁴ Louis, Roger., *Rwanda-Burundi, 1884-1919*, London: Oxford University Press/ Clarendon Press, 1963, p. 157.

²²⁵ Nahimana, F., *Rwanda. Emergence d'un Etat*, Paris: l'Harmattan, 1993, p. 235.

52 epidemics and disasters which destroyed animals, human beings including local heroes and chiefs from 1890 to 1931. Consequently, the population attributed them to the *Inkamba* warriors of chief Rwubusisi. The resentment went to such an extent it left a legacy of popular disagreeable language that evokes the horrors; it also gave vent to the strong sentiments of revenge²²⁶.

Ndungutse's 'revolts' were also recounted by Honke²²⁷. While Louis says that Ndungutse was killed in the German attack, the 1928 colonial administration reported a new insurrection of more than 2000 rebels conducted by 'Dungutse' (sic). The revolts, according to the accounts were overcome by the Belgian troops who left several victims among the population²²⁸.

The imposition of the Batutsi rulers from the centre and south of Rwanda on the autonomous regions generated psychological frustrations, rancour and wounds which have never healed. Apart from the losses in human and material resources, the centres of local government based on the traditional socio-political and religious equilibrium, respecting the consensus of the inhabitants of the clans were brutally ended. Their organisation was ignored, even destroyed, and replaced by foreign Batutsi rulers imposed with force. For the populations concerned, especially those from the north, history did not end like that; the processes provoked frustrations, revolts, repression and rancour and created resentment against the native of the centre and the south widely considered as the 'Batutsi or Abanyenduga'(natives of the centre and south of Rwanda)²²⁹ as earlier indicated.

II.4. Shifting Alliances and Allegiances

C.Attebury put forward as a major cause of the 1959 revolution, the 'power deflation' provoked by the arbitrary and repressive generalising of the central core system; the 'cumulative impact'; the intransigence and indecision of the colonial administration which was then incapable of regulating the accelerators. The changes introduced by both the colonisers, Germans then Belgians and the missionaries increased the exploitative capability of the Batutsi oligarchy over their subordinates the Bahutu and many Batutsi, while at the same time, created the conditions of 'power deflation'. This is because they misunderstood the functioning of the traditional system.²³⁰

II.4.1. 'Deflation' of Colonial and Monarchical Authority

What C.Attenbury considers as cumulative impact was the western education which provided the possibilities of the formation of the Bahutu elite in the Catholic seminaries who later became the prominent protesters; the growth of the population in the rural areas reaching a density of 177 per Sq.km. in Ruhengeri and 159 in Save in Butare in the 1950s. There were

²²⁶ Ibid. pp.247-287.

²²⁷ Honke, G., op.cit. p. 112.

²²⁸ Rapport administration colonial Ruanda-Urundi, p.42. Convergent sources show that Ndungutse was killed by the Germans. The reference to him in the colonial report seems to be a deliberate association of any revolts of the indigenous people to that personage.

²²⁹ Interview with Father Mungwarareba, Deltmond, 1996.

²³⁰ Attenbury, C., *Revolution in Rwanda*. Madison, Wisconsin: African studies Program- University of Wisconsin, 1970, pp.2/3.

also the delay in introducing the socio-political reforms. Though a decree making provision for the elections existed from 1943 onwards these could only take place in 1956 under UN pressure. Organised in 1956, the first elections ever held deceived both from the aspect of correcting the imbalance and from the fact that they became a pretext for some to pursue the polarisation of the problem into the Bahutu-Batutsi opposition. Only one person from Bahutu background out of 45 chiefs; and 10 sub-chiefs out of 559 were elected. Astonishingly, the blame for the poor score was put on the psychological, cultural and historical domination of the Batutsi over the Bahutu; the colonial power and missionaries were acquitted. M. Maus, a member of the Superior Council of Rwanda-Urundi commented:

Que peut-on attendre d'élections chez un peuple esclave? Au départ tout le processus est déjà faussé... Pour les campagnes électorales toujours influentes, le clan Tutsi a tous les atouts: chefs, sous-chefs, notables, qui étant riches et puissants, disposent de voitures pour se déplacer, peuvent acheter des candidats à leur dévolution, menacer leurs sujets et clients, etc. Le clan hutu, lui, n'a rien que sa profonde ignorance, son complexe d'infériorité, son extrême dénuement, sa terreur atavique des autorités Tutsi²³¹.

The passage is characteristic of the blame which, from the beginning of the petitions for independence, precipitately started to be put to the Batutsi, the yesterday allies of the Europeans. Honestly, this should not have been the case. Section 3.6. of this chapter suggests that the authorities responsible for the elaboration and implementation of the discriminatory policies were the colonial administration and the Church, not the Batutsi elite, though the latter were beneficiaries.

A second failure of the ruling coalition came from the attempt to suppress the Ubuhake system. Ubuhake, one of the most documented aspects as mentioned above, was suppressed by Mwami (king)'s decree in 1952. The system linked the monopoly of the economic resources to the control of politics. In fact the ubuhake would not end with the death of any contracting party; it was rather inherited by the male descendant, the shebuja (lords) and the clients. It guaranteed to the owners of the cattle to have the symbolism of political power, while leaving the clients with the precarious possession of the cows.

Responding to many demands including those from the Batutsi elite²³², the Mwami suppressed the ubuhake. He justified his decision before the Superior Council: "L'ubuhake étant considéré comme une entrave réelle à l'évolution du pays, une exploitation de la masse par quelques shebuja, il ne reste qu'à le supprimer sans se soucier des mécontents qui pourraient provenir de certaines catégories de gens"²³³.

However, the decree suppressing the ubuhake failed to make provision for the land reforms, thus leaving the Clients who earned cows with shortage of pastures. These remained under the control of the ruling classes; an appeal to distribute them was rejected by the Superior Council in 1955. Reyntjens rightly concluded that the incapacity of the regime to resolve the

²³¹ Maus, A., Member of the Superior Council of the Country. Quoted in Reyntjens, 1985, p.190.

²³² See section II.2.2.

²³³ Reyntjens, 1985, p. 204.

land properties issue may have been at the heart of the 1959-1961 revolution. Many Bahutu became aware of the continuing dependency upon the Batutsi aristocracy²³⁴.

II.4.2. Accelerators of the 1959 Revolution

The other factors which accelerated the 1959 revolution were both the intransigence of the Batutsi ruling class and the indecision of the colonial administration. From 1948 the UN missions had visited Rwanda every three years and requested that democratic reforms be accelerated.

In 1957 during the presence of the UN delegation, the Superior Council of the Country under the chairship of the Mwami, issued a white paper asserting that the crisis which generated many petitions and articles in the press was not a 'Hutu-Tutsi' one but a White-African problem. In fact, while Belgium was slipping into muteness showing refusing to think about democratic reforms, some Bahutu leaders started petitioning for constitutional changes but met with the resistance and arrogance of the conservative entourage of the Mwami. For example in 1956 and 1957 petitioners led by Joseph. H.Gitera were ignored by the Mwami in Nyanza. Though in the first instances they were still imbued with reverence to Mwami considering him as their 'father' and expressing their deep gratitude for being invited at the court, the delegation was shocked to realise that the king too was as an 'arrogant Tutsi' as his entourage. In fact, the myth of 'Hamite supremacy' has been strongly assimilated by the ruling class, an attitude which was soon going to be used on their detriment by those ignored.

In March of that year, a petition of nine Bahutu leaders had posed the problem in terms of the 'Hamite-Hutu' opposition. While the Batutsi leaders campaigned for immediate independence, the Bahutu leaders asked among other things: the abolition of the indirect administration favouring the sole Batutsi elite; the abolition of the corvées; the installation of a social charter designed to promote syndicalism; the freedom of speech; the privacy of property and the creation of a rural trust for the promotion of peasantry; the codification of the custom; the promotion of the Bahutu in the public administration; equal access to opportunities in education and scholarship.

The petitioners also demanded a democratisation of the institutions before the independence: they perceived it as a double liberation of the 'Hutu from both the 'Hamites' and 'Bazungu' (Whites) colonisation"²³⁵. However, they insisted that Belgium should not withdraw from

²³⁴ibid. p. 208

²³⁵ The 'Bahutu Manifesto' was in the beginning a petition of nine young leaders including: M. Niyonzima, Gregoire Kayibanda. C. Ndahayo, I. Nzeyimana, C. Murindahabi, G. Sentama., S. Munyambonera, J. Sibomana and Joseph Habyarimana Gitera. It stands in three sections: the first part objects on the pretexts given in refusing the promotion of the Muhutu; second, it identifies the dimensions of the 'indigenous racial problem' and third, the authors propose 'immediate solutions':

I. "Les rumeurs seront déjà parvenus à l'autorité du Gouvernement par la presse et peut-être aussi par la parole au sujet de la situation actuelle des relations Muhutu-Mututsi au Rwanda ... La situation actuelle provient en grande partie de l'état créé par l'ancienne structure politico-sociale du Rwanda, en particulier le Buhake, et de l'application à fond et généralisée de l'administration indirecte, ainsi que par la disparition de certaines institutions sociales anciennes qui ont été effacées sans qu'on ait permis à des institutions modernes, occidentales correspondantes de s'établir et de compenser L'interaction élite - masse est indéniable, mais à condition que l'élite soit de la masse. Au fond du problème il s'agit d'un colonialisme à deux étages: le Muhutu devant supporter

Rwanda or accord independence before the 'indigenous colonisation' was resolved. The authors of the petition used a language which shows a degree of assimilation of the Hamite theory and a resentment due to the test of exclusion their group had endured.

The entourage of the Mwami and the Mwami himself, rejected energetically this aspiration to changes. In May 1958, 14 senior councillors of the court (*abagaragu bakuru b' I bwami*) in the capital, Nyanza, issued two documents of a very arrogant and ethnic tone rejecting these demands en bloc. They ridiculed the claim of cooperation. The first document introduced what they called the "historic detail of the Banyiginya reign in Rwanda and rejected the claim of brotherhood with the Bahutu justifying their argument with myths and legends:

The ancestor of the Banyiginya (the reigning lineage) is Kigwa. He arrived in Rwanda with his brother Mututsi Mutusi and their sister Nyampundu... To reclaim resources sharing, one must prove a brotherhood. But the relations between us (Batutsi) and them (Bahutu) have always been build on servitude. Thus, there is no foundation of brotherhood (...)The Bahutu have also pretended that Kanyarwanda is our common ancestor, the 'mediator' of all the Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa families. But Kanyarwanda is the son of Gihanga, of Kazi, of Merano, of Randa, of Kobo, of Gisa, of Kijuru, of Kimanuka, of Kigwa. This Kigwa found the Bahutu in Rwanda. How then 'Kanyarwanda far posterior to the existence of the three races, Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa, found existing, can be their common ancestor? Our history says that Ruganzu had killed many 'Bahinza (Hutu monarchs) and then conquered the Bahutu counties of which those Bahinza were kings. How then the Bahutu could pretend being our brothers? All the details are available in *Inganji Karinga* (our: Kagame, 1943)²³⁶.

le hamite et sa domination et l' Européen et ses lois passant systématiquement par le canal Mututsi (leta mbirigi et leta ntutsi)!. La méthode de la remorque ' blanc-hamite-muhutu' est à exclure ...

II. On pourrait cependant le préciser: le problème est avant tout un problème de monopole politique dont dispose une race, le mututsi; monopole politique qui, étant donné l'ensemble des structures actuelles devient un monopole économique et social..., vu les sélections de facto dans l'Enseignement, parvient à être un monopole culturel, au grand désespoir des Bahutu qui se voient condamnés à rester d'éternels manoeuvres subalternes, et pis encore, après une indépendance éventuelle qu'ils auront aidé à conquérir sans savoir ce qu'ils font... Les privilèges de son frère qui commande la colline ont toujours concouru à rehausser le Mututsi prive. Certaines fonctions sociales furent même " réservées" à la noblesse et la civilisation actuelle, par l' administration indirecte, n' a fait que renforcer et quasi généraliser cette réserve.

... Encore une fois on pourrait contester la qualité de vrais hamites à quelques numéros; mais la sélection de fait (opérée par le hasard?) que présentent actuellement les établissements secondaires, crève les yeux. Des arguments ne manquent alors pour démontrer que le Muhutu est inapte, qu'il est pauvre, qu'il ne sait pas se présenter. L' inaptitude est à prouver; la pauvreté est son lot dans le système social actuel ...La jeunesse muhutu (quelques éléments batutsi complètement déçus ont aussi le même sort) qui à pour devise "in itineribus semper" à l' intérieur du pays ou à l' extérieur, fuyant le travail- corvée, non plus adapté à l'état et à la psychologie d'aujourd'hui, n'accepte plus ou à peine la discipline de la contrainte qui donne d'ailleurs occasions aux abus que les autorités semblent ignorer....

III. Ce n'est pas que nous veuillions un piétinement sur place: nous sommes d'accord que le Conseil Supérieur Tutsi puisse participer progressivement et plus effectivement aux affaires du pays; mais plus fortement encore, nous réclamons du Gouvernement tutélaire et de l'administration tutsi qu'une action plus positive et sans tergiversations soit menée pour l'émancipation économique et politique du Muthu de la remorque hamite traditionnelle.

... Les gens ne sont d'ailleurs pas sans être rendu compte de l'appui de l'administration indirecte au monopole mututsi. Aussi pour mieux surveiller ce monopole de race, nous nous opposons énergiquement du moins pour le moment, à la suppression dans les pièces d'identité officielles ou privées de mentions 'muhutu', 'mututsi', 'mutwa'". Nkundabagenzi, F., *Rwanda Politique 1958-1960*, Brussels. CRISP, 1961, p 20-29.

²³⁶ Nkundabagenzi, F., *Rwanda Politique, 1958-1960*, Bruxelles: IRSP, 1961, p.35/6.

The second document, les political was an opposition to the suppression of the ibikingi (the lord-land properties) on the ground that it was the custom of the country. They instead proposed to remove the over demographic population towards the then unoccupied lands in the east (Mutara, Bugesera, Rukaryi, icyanya, Mubari, etc).

On 12 June 1958 Mwami Mutara III Rudahigwa summarised the deliberations of the Superior Council of the country on the problem 'Bahutu-Batutsi'. "It is a damaging increasing noisy propaganda spread by a small group acting under foreign influence with communist ideas. Their intention is to divide the country. They would not succeed to divide a country whose national unity and secular political force organisation has annihilated the most powerful attackers. The country is reunited to identify, cut down, eradicate and burn that ill tree which is infecting its life. Then a motion was voted to "ask that the colonial government remove from the official documents the terms Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa". Nkundabagenzi, F., op.cit. .37.

This was also part of the deification of the founder of the dynasty otherwise made by the Abiru including the most learned of them, Father Kagame who claimed the paternity of the myth. In taking such a hard-line position, they confined themselves in the role of Hamite equals foreign, equals conqueror, dominant; they thus gave the weight to the attacks of their opponents. The text was an extract of the myth of *ibimanuka* (those who descended from sky) known also as *umugani w'ibirari*(*the story of the journey*) which has been popularised by Father Kagame from 1943.

If there would be no single intelligent human being today to believe in such a thing like people descending from sky to rule over Rwandans, it seems to the present writer that in recounting this legend of Gihanga which occurred within the interlacustrine region, the entourage of the Mwami attributed to that myth classic functions, in particular: "offering explanation of origin and presenting a story which, partly because of its fantastic or supernatural elements, will have a special appeal to the imagination"; being a "legend echoing the power and wisdom of venerated princes who lived in bygone days who have been deified by later generations ...; and being the products of fraud committed by princes and priests who took advantage of the superstitions of the masses to keep them under control"²³⁷.

As such, the myth plays a role of the fraud so as to allow the elite to keep the masses under control. The entourage of the Mwami including Father Kagame who, at the time, was chaplain to the King, surely knew about such a fraud but still perpetuated mysticism to justify their privileges. Whether people still believed in that myth was not an issue at the time. The conservative Batutsi who themselves, had been confined in such an attitude by the different theories and policies, by the colonial administration and the Church, wanted to impress a large segment of the population.

The moral of the myth of *ibimanuka* does not differ from that of the Hamite recounted in chapter three. They all profess the supremacy of the Batutsi ('Hamites'; they attributed them an origin different from the Bahutu's; they characterise them as conquerors).

A month later, Mwami (King) Mutara III tried to be more inclusive when he said that "Ces ennemis du pays ne réussirent guère à diviser le Ruanda dont l'union nationale est neuf fois séculaire et dont la force d'organisation politique a toujours anéanti les plus fortes attaques des envahisseurs" ²³⁸. This position contrasted from the following paragraph of the same message in which he became less tolerant arguing that the "mauvais arbre sera trouvé, déraciné et brûlé"; it also contrasted from the arrogant and divisive message of his entourage

²³⁷ Baal,J.van & Beek, W.E.A. van, Symbols for Communication: an Introduction to the anthropological study of Religion, Assen : van Gorcum, 1985, p.15.

²³⁸ Nkundabagenzi, op.cit. p. 37.

whom he did not correct nor invite them to find a ground for a mutual understanding with the petitioners Bahutu and the colonial power.

In that polarisation, surprisingly, the Bahutu leaders received full support from the colonial rulers and the Catholic Church hierarchy, a move which needs further discussions. The intransigence of the Batutsi ultra-conservatives and the Mwami himself, the indecision of the Belgian colonial administration which failed to show when and how the changes would come made the Bahutu feel weak in the event that the Belgian administration left without having achieved substantial reforms.

The intransigence led to an escalation of the conflict. And what was set to be a struggle for an ideology of liberation became a political intolerance. Many people who experienced the suffering of the Batutsi which followed the 1959 Revolution have criticised the Bahutu manifesto for having been the beginning of the 'racial ideology' (Chrétien, 1996). But many others condemn rather the poor management of that period by the colonial power as well as the management of the aftermath of the revolution by the politicians and the Church.

According to Antoine Mugesera, the Bahutu manifesto was not ethnicist in its foundations. It asserted the intention to co-operate with the 'Batutsi patriots' and the Batutsi less privileged. But then those were forgotten during the massacres. For A. Mugesera, the 1959 revolution had not liberated either Bahtutu, Batutsi or Batwa of their humiliation, 'ethnic complex' and regionalism, exploitation and domination, cultural alienation. A.Mugesera also condemns the UNAR (With Batutsi dominance) monarchist party for having initiated physical violence and then the attacks of the *Inyenzi* which produced many sad consequences such as, first to provoke the massacres of the Batutsi, second to legitimate the extremism of ethno-politicians and third to link the security of the Batutsi inside the country to the attitude of a clique of 'external terrorists'²³⁹.

Similarly, Muzungu's argues that Kayibanda did not depart from his political programme, the liberation of the poor, the exploited masses. He did the "liberation theology before the letter. But he could not control some of the strategies he was brought to adopt such as the colonial power the concept of "ethnic majority equals political majority" inspired by the colonialists²⁴⁰.

II.4.3. Hesitations and Indecision of Colonial Authorities

Meanwhile, the colonial authorities were indecisive on whether or not to conduct the political changes and how. Governor, J.P. Harroy gave a speech in which he said that the problem was

²³⁹ Mugesera, A., "La Révolution Rwandaise, Trente Ans Après... Une Approche Analytique et Critique". In *Dialogue* no 137 November - Décembre 1989, pp.144-168, particulièrement, pp.167/8.

²⁴⁰ Mugesera, A., "l'Idéologie Ethniste". In *Les Cahiers Evangile et Société*, no 3 juin 1996. Kigali: Fraternité St Dominique. See also Father Muzungu, B., "Diagnostic du Mal Rwandais" in *Dialogue* no 18, pp 57-70.

not political but the abuse by local representatives on the peasants²⁴¹. Nevertheless, he failed to indicate how and when the reforms would come. So on the one hand, there was an ultra-conservative group rejecting the call for power sharing; on the other, a colonial administration making the provision to present the Batutsi ruling class ('local representatives') as solely accountable for the mistakes and the unjust system.

It is in such a tense climate of suspicion and open intolerance that the first political parties were born, including the MDR-PARMEHUTU, APROSOMA, UNAR and RADER. Although all campaigned for independence, they had different visions, perceptions, alliances and strategies. The two major groups, MDR-PARMEHUTU had opted for a close co-operation and a low profile in its demands towards the colonial power, with the assistance of the Church whilst the UNAR had opted for a demand of immediate independence in a discourse that was characterised as nationalist, "openly anti-foreign, anti-colonial and anti-Church"²⁴².

Belgium and the Catholic Church opted for the Bahutu, considered flexible and less dangerous. The UNAR reclamations were echoed by the UN under the influence of the non-aligned movement. The motives of this volte-face of the two ruling powers, the Church and the colonial power are discussed in the next chapter as we debate the shift of alliances and allegiances.

One of many other controversial issues was the succession of King Rudahigwa whose death in Bujumbura, 25th July 1959 surprised the population. The Mwami descended in Bujumbura on July 24 where it is believed he was called by telegram for a meeting with the colonial authorities. Surprisingly, he arrived in a deserted city (Governor Harroy was on holiday in Belgium) and his deputy, Toldeur was touring the south of Burundi). Then he decided to visit his doctor, Mr Vinck, a Belgian native, working in the colonial hospital in Bujumbura. The Mwami received a fatal injection²⁴³. Several hypotheses regarding the cause of his death occurred ; one which is relevant to our work implicated the colonial administration together with the Church in the plot²⁴⁴.

As a consequence of this tragic death three groups engaged separately in planning the take over of the throne. The first group was made of the ritualists, Abiru including Father Kagame ; the second group was the colonial authorities in co-operation with the Church (Archbishop Perraudin) ; the third group was the opposition leaders. The third group (opposition) wanted a constitutional monarch ; the second (colonial power and the Church) opted for the designation of a Regent which would be set up after the burial; the first group which were successful, opted for the tradition to be respected, the name of the successor to be known before the burial took place to avoid the vacancy of the throne²⁴⁵.

²⁴¹ Attenbury, op.cit. p.32.

²⁴² Ibid. p. 43.

²⁴³ Interview in Tervuren with in June 1996 with M. d.H. who was a senior researcher in the colony at the time.

²⁴⁴ Reyntjens discusses and rejects two options : the suicide and the plot organised by the colonial authorities and the Church. He keeps a third option of an error of the doctor during the treatment : " une injection de megacilline, administree erroneement de facon intraveineuse au lieu d'intramusculaire lui aurait ete fatale ". Reyntjens, 1985, p.241.

²⁴⁵ Reyntjens, F., 1985, p.244.

Hence, the burial ceremony, 28 July 1959 in Mwima (Nyanza), the ritualists, who probably wanted to have their revenge against the colonial-missionary coalition, surprised the colonial sponsors by announcing the name of the incumbent, Kigeri V Ndahindurwa, without their consent. Following this incident the already damaged relations between the Batutsi and the two powers deteriorated and accelerated the arrival of the 1959 revolution. In the perspective of this thesis, the colonial powers (the Catholic Church included) were confirmed in their determination to end their alliance with the Batutsi ruling class whom they blamed for being 'pro-Communist', 'anti-foreigners' and 'anti-Church'.

Lemarchand observed the same phenomenon in the chief of the same Governor, Harroy and his subordinates towards the leading politicians from Batutsi background in Burundi²⁴⁶. Neither analysis of the crisis by the Bahutu protesters, nor the resistance of conservative oligarchy to power sharing rendered a service for peace, justice and confidence between the two communities. Yet, despite the questionable democratic and nationalist character of the Batutsi oligarchy's demand for independence, it is right to underline the fact that the position adopted by both the colonial and Catholic Church authorities left the feeling that, to paraphrase Linden, they were engaged in "a subtle plot to divide and break a potentially powerful nationalist movement led by a Tutsi vanguard"²⁴⁷.

After that, the competition developed into intolerance and threats which culminated in violence. This was inaugurated on 2 November when one of the Bahutu sub-chiefs, Dominique Mbonyumutwa, was attacked and apparently harassed by a group of young Batutsi. This opened the way for the Bahutu upheavals which later became the 1959-1961 'Revolution'. The monarchy was rejected in Gitarama, 28 January 1961 and the Republic proclaimed. Independence came on 1 July 1962,²⁴⁸.

²⁴⁶ Lemarchand, R., *Burundi. Ethnic Conflict*, pp.52-55.

²⁴⁷ Linden, op.cit. p.250/1.

²⁴⁸ **Brief Accounts of the Events from November 1959 to July 1962.**

Following the 3 November 1959 uprising, several chiefs and sub-chiefs were displaced or made victims of violence. On the 25 November 1959 the colonial power issued a decree suggesting its intention to democratise the institutions but at the same time the Resident, colonel Logiest nominated 120 Bahutu to the vacant posts. UNAR refused any collaboration till UN had intervened to guarantee independence. In April 1960, the democratic opposition met and ask the colonial power to nominate a progressive king in the place of Kigeri V Ndahindurwa. June to July 1960 the colonial authority organised communal elections that gave as results: PARMEHUTU winning 70,4 % votes, APROSOMA, 7,4%, RADER 6,6 % and UNAR 1,79 %. This poor score of UNAR was perceived as resulting from its call for abstentions. It further refused to recognise the outcome of the elections. The king-headed "Superior Council" was replaced by a provisional assembly of 48 members elected by an electorate made of the interim communal authorities. The leader of Parmehutu, Gregoire Kayibanda formed a provisional cabinet of 19 members including 9 Europeans and 3 Tutsi.

On 28 January 1961 a congress of Burgomasters and local councillors was organised in Gitarama by the Provisional Government assisted by the colonial authorities with the consent of the Church. In Gitarama 25000 people spontaneously assembled to hear about the unusual event. The meeting turned into an anti-monarchical event which proclaimed the abolition of the monarchy and the reign of King Kigeri as well as the symbols of the monarchy, Karinga and Abiru. The Congress elected a new president Dominique Mbonyumutwa, and a government led by Gregoire Kayibanda, both from the Parmehutu political Party.

The results of this congress were rejected by UNAR which appealed to UN. The latter organised a referendum on the monarchy together with the parliamentary elections on the 25 September 1961. The monarchy was rejected by

II.4.4. Role of Colonel Logiest

Into this process appeared Colonel Logiest, a Belgian native from a Catholic social democrat political background who arrived from Congo where he had been deputy - commander of the colonial troops²⁴⁹. Like Mgr Perraudin, Logiest gave a determinant emphasis to the revolution. Their actions complemented with the resentment of the vast majority of the population, the 'power deflation', the international pressure, the intransigence and the death of the Mwami in precipitating the revolution.

For Linden, political developments following the revolt were dominated by three factors: the resolute bias on behalf of the Bahutu of the Special Resident, Colonel Logiest, a Catholic Social Democrat; the increasing sophistication of the PARMEHUTU propaganda and the success of Kayibanda's men on the hills at the time when hundreds of new chieftaincies were becoming available (270). It seems, from the point of view of this thesis that it would not be an insult to the quality of organisation and determination of Kayibanda and his colleagues to say that their sudden success and the penetration of the PARMEHUTU propaganda on the hills heavily relied on Colonel Logiest and the Catholic Church resolute support. At least in the court-term, the victory would have been unthinkable given the fact that, on the one hand, the masses still religiously associated the power of the Mwami to Imana, and on the other, the UNAR party and the conservative Batutsi were determined to snip out any dissent voice. Would Logiest and Perraudin have had different attitude that Kayibanda and some prominent leaders would have been eliminated and the revolution delayed for some more decades as King Rudahigwa himself unambiguously put it: " le pays entier est coalisé à la recherche de l'arbre mauvais qui produit ces mauvais fruits de division. Quand il sera trouvé, il sera coupé, déraciné et brûlé pour qu'il disparaisse et que rien ne reste"²⁵⁰.

In his memoirs, Logiest presents the problem of Rwanda at the time, as resulting from the domination of one "caste, the Hamite" over the Bahutu. Logiest shows how, after contacting some political and religious authorities, and after reading the documentation provided by the leaders of the political parties, he took the decision to support the Bahutu cause.

La lecture de ces documents fut déterminante pour moi. Il fallait absolument faire quelque chose pour donner aux Hutu une raison d'espérer même si cela signifiait un usage quelque peu forcé des pouvoirs qui m'avaient été conférés sous les régimes de l'état d'exception. Je décidai de convoquer les administrateurs et chefs de territoires.²⁵¹

80 % of the voters. MDR-PARMEHUTU won 77,7 % (35 seats), UNAR 16,8% (7 seats), APROSOMA 3,5% (2 seats). Kayibanda was then elected president of the country and prepared the country for independence, the 1 July 1962.

Sources: Heremans, R., *Introduction à l'Histoire du Rwanda*, Kigali: 1970 ; Logiest, G., *Mission Rwanda. Un Blanc dans la Bagarre Hutu-Tutsi*, Paris: Didier/ Hatier 1988 ; Paternostre de la Mairie, B., *Pour Vous mes Frères. Kayibanda, premier Président du Rwanda*, Paris, Toquin, 1995; Lemarchand, R., *Rwanda and Burundi*, London: Pall Mall, 1970 ; Nkunuzumwami, E., *La tragédie Rwandaise. Historique et perspectives*, Paris : L'harmattan, 1996

²⁴⁹ Logiest was named 'Military Resident' on 11 November 1959 'to pacify the country'. This person played a key role in the events that fractured the country. On 3 December, he was promoted new 'Special Resident'.

²⁵⁰ Mwami Mutara III Rudahigwa before the *Conseil Supérieur du Pays*, 12 June 1958. In Nkundabagenzi, op.cit. p.37.

²⁵¹ Logiest, G., *Mission au Rwanda. Un Blanc dans la Bagarre Tutsi-Hutu*, Paris : Didier Hatier, 1988, p.58

Colonel Logiest invited the population to form committees to expell undesirable people; to oppose the authorities who wanted to renegotiate their reintegration. This kind of invitation to 'popular justica' blocked any process of conciliation between the population and the authorities in an eventual negotiation of their reintegration. Instead, the invitation was a formula encouraging the population to express resentment and to spread violence.

Logiest's determination to handle the problem in automatically withdrawing the privileges of authority from all the Batutsi chiefs and handing it to the Bahutu leaders deepened irremediably the 'ethnic' divide; what was a more political problem needing the reform of the mechanisms of power sharing, the respect of rights for every single Rwandan, the liberation from the colonial spectre, was then conceived by the senior colonial authorities in the land, as a question of liberation of the 'enslaved Hutu' from the domination of the 'foreign powerful Hamite'. During the events that followed a large number of positions of chiefs and sub-chiefs were vacant. 23 chiefs out of 45 and 158 sub-chiefs out of 489 in place before the upheaval of 2 November 1959, were either arrested, exiled, displaced, had resigned or been killed. Logiest took the opportunity to sweep away the Batutsi authorities. Reyntjens puts it as follows:

Ce fut une occasion inespérée pour le colonel Logiest, qui voyait son action contrecarrée par la hiérarchie coutumière tutsi. Il était ainsi difficile de relayer des ordres et des messages à la population sans déformation en cours de route, lorsqu'il fallait suivre la filière coutumière (mwami- chef- sous-chef) Logiest donna par conséquent ordre aux administrateurs de territoires (Européens) de lui proposer la révocation du plus grand nombre possible de chefs et de sous-chefs tutsi. Même là où les autorités tutsi étaient restées en place le résident spécial voulait les déloger par tous les moyens. Passant outre aux objections du résident Général Harroy qui – sans trop insister- fit remarquer l'illégalité de pareille solution, le colonel Logiest conseillait 'la constitution de comités qui feront connaître les noms de personnes qui seront déclarés indésirables et qui seront éloignés. A la question de savoir si comme le prévoyait le décret de 1952, les chefs qui le souhaiteraient pourraient reprendre leur commandement, Logiest répondit que 'si une autorité chassée par la population manifeste le désir d'être réintégrée, il faut s'y opposer pour des raisons d'ordre public et de sécurité' S'adressant à l'administrateur de Ruhengeri, Logiest dit: 'avec la quasi totalité autorités hutu, votre territoire doit servir d'exemple à tout le Ruanda. Vous devez prouver que les Bahutu sont capables de participer activement à la direction de leur pays'²⁵².

We come across good intentions in favour of the Hutu. However, following the illegal and violent procedures utilised to implement the supposed reforms, these intentions dramatically fractured Rwandan society. Inviting the population to form committees which would elaborate the list of the undesirable people was clearly an act susceptible to oppose the population; it was a suggestion that some were not desirable. It is an indisputable reality that many Batutsi chiefs had extremely cordial relations with the population as proved by many who remained in their chiftaincies protected by the population. Rejecting the idea that those who wished ask for keeping their positions- which actually would involve negotiating their reintegration towards the population- has burned the chances for conciliation.

Assessing the event thirty years later, Logiest accepted that he acted illegally, adding however, that the illegality was justified in the case of a simple upheaval. For him, there was no doubt that he was dealing with a 'true revolution'²⁵³. If we extrapolate from his assertion,

²⁵² Reyntjens, F., op.cit. pp.268/9.

²⁵³ Logiest, Op.cit. p.125.

he is really saying that there was no political ethics during a revolution, that the end justified the means. But did this justify a total ban on a party of the population, even if they had been associated with and participated in a discriminatory system? Clearly, the independence of the former Belgian colonies has been rashly and poorly prepared as the French Foreign Affairs Minister Mr. Vedrine put it in his responses to the Commission of the French Parliament on the role of France in Rwanda.

Conclusion

The factors that contributed to the cementing of the pre-colonial Rwandan reality were bound into a system of 'relational harmony' which rarely, incited to rejection or violence according to the limited evidence we have. However, the discussions isolated an attitude of distinctiveness within the ruling lineages which have become the ingredients of the seed of disintegration.

It was necessary to demonstrate that in the end of 19th, beginning of 20th century the new actors, including colonial agents and missionaries arrived and then played a key role in spreading the theories and policies based on race supremacy.

Such a démarche was necessary so as to question an order founded on the presuppositions of 'race supremacy' to which Christian missions fully co-operated in reshaping Rwandan society. The following chapter recounts the story of the Christian missions, their implantation; their principles of evangelism, their relations with the population and examines whether or not they fulfilled the Gospel's mandate of being the witness of God's reign of Love and Justice. Among other things that will be debated is whether the Churches have been factors of unity or of division among the Rwandans.

Chapter III: THE CHURCH: PROMOTER OF RACIAL IDEOLOGY AS TOOL OF DOMINATION

Introduction

During its short period of existence (less than a century) Rwandan Christianity has become one of the major factors beside the state organisation. In fact, both Church and state are two institutions which converge spatially and temporarily. They may collaborate with or oppose each other, they may even oppose each other and at the same time collaborate. This joins the debate started in the preceding chapters where it has been shown that the explorers and colonialists who have introduced the ideology of race supremacy endorse a great deal of the polarisation of society. Christianity has been another external agency which participated in the shaping of Rwandan society. Both Catholics and Protestants played a key role alongside the colonial rulers in the making of policies and practices.

In the course of evangelisation Rwandan Christianity has generated two significant movements, education in missionary schools and mass conversions. The development and the achievements of these two events was marked by the theory of 'race supremacy' mentioned in the precedent chapter and which became a premise to the crystallisation of ethnic consciousness. The latter led into open tensions during the political changes of the 1950s; in the end, the fabric of society was severely torn then left unhealed.

This chapter aims then to look at, first, the implantation of Christianity, Catholic and Protestant; second, how both Catholics and Protestants created images of Rwandans and told new narratives; third, what were the backgrounds of the missionaries; fourth, some examples of how ethnic ideology was shaped, the case of the missionary schools and the mass conversions; fifth the U-turn of the Churches during the 1950s.

III.1. Missionary Scramble for Rwanda

From the beginning Catholic and Protestants would occupy the Rwandan territory in a kind of competition, aiming in particular to evangelise through converting the ruling class. The evangelisation of Rwanda began in 1900 with the installation of the White Fathers (Catholics) founded in Algiers in 1868 by Mgr. and then Cardinal Lavigerie. Led by Mgr. J.J. Hirth, the missionaries arrived in Rwanda from Uganda. They were impressed by the highly populated Rwanda and by the fact that there was no other religious influence²⁵⁴. The White Fathers then established a plan of occupation of the territory before the arrival of the Protestants and the Muslims. Their work was facilitated by the German colonial authorities, in particular, Resident Dr Richard Kandt who saw in the development of Christianity a factor

²⁵⁴ Butselaar & Twagirayesu, M., *Ce Don que nous Avons Reçu*, Bruxelles: EPR, 1982.

for promoting pacification (in particular with regard to the rebellious northern region) as well as an ingredient for development and a bulwark against Islam.

But how then and why the Catholics pioneered in evangelising a German (mostly Protestant) colony? There was, on the one hand, an accidental meeting of the humanist activities developed in Germany by anti-slavery groups and on the Africa continent by Cardinal Lavigerie, and on the other hand, the failure of the German Protestantism to carry the Lord's Great Commission outside Germany²⁵⁵. With the Berlin Conference (1884-1885) which divided the Africa continent among the imperial powers, Cardinal Lavigerie established contacts with Germany through his anti-slavery movements. He received ideological backing from groups which were campaigning against the Arab slave trade. Thus, the Reichstag authorised the White Fathers to start evangelising in 1884 in Germany's East Africa colonies. Equally, the Catholic missionaries were left the ground because the Protestant missionary organisations were reluctant to start working in Rwanda.²⁵⁶

The first Protestant missionaries from the Bethel mission²⁵⁷ established themselves in Zinga (east) and Kirinda in the west (1907), Rubengera (1909), Kiteme on Idjwi Ireland (1910) at present day in R.D. Congo, Remera-Rukoma (1912) in the centre. When Germans were defeated in the First World War, the missionaries left in 1916. The activities were taken over by the Belgian Protestant Missions Society for the Congo (SBMPC) in 1921. Other Protestant missions including the Church Missionary Society-Rwanda Mission (1922) joined later²⁵⁸.

This scramble for Rwanda leaves us with some thoughts. Firstly, the Catholic missionaries set up a strategy which allowed them to cover the whole country in a short time starting, in particular in the regions which were highly populated (Save, Bugoyi, Kinyaga, Kabgayi respectively in 1900, 1901, 1903, 1905), or had historical, cultural and political importance²⁵⁹. This coverage allowed the missionaries to start influencing the chiefs around the country and to gradually modify the symbols of the cultural and regional diversity.

Secondly, during the colonial era, Rwanda had one Church establishment whose presence was widely distributed throughout the land. The Protestants who arrived at different epochs were scattered around the country. Adding to the Protestant compartmentalisation, a 1930s Comity Agreement parcelled out the country into spheres of influence which emphasised their geographical and denominational isolation. Nevertheless, those who became Christians

²⁵⁵ Friedler, K., *Christianity and African Culture. Conservative German Protestant Missionaries in Tanzania, 1900-1994*, Leiden/NY: E.J.Brill, 1966, p.66.

²⁵⁶ Heremans, R., "L'église catholique à l'époque coloniale". In *Dialogue* no 189. February-March 1996, pp. 15-20.

²⁵⁷ Founded in 1886 to bring a medical and spiritual support to the missionaries in the East African Colonies, the *Evangelical Society for the Evangelisation of the Eastern German* which would become the Bethel Mission started really its activities only when a man of extreme spiritual energy, an articulate theologian, Pastor Friedrich von Bodelschwingh combined the direction of the Mission and the institutions of handicapped and mental rehabilitation in Bethel. Then arose the worldly vision for the Mission. Gatwa, T., "Eglises Protestantes. Contributions Sociales de Valeur?" In *Dialogue*, no 189 Brussels, Février-Mars 1996, pp 29-41, particularly p.31.

²⁵⁸ Gatwa, T & Karamaga, A., *Les Autres Chrétiens Rwandais. Présence Protestante*, Kigali, Urwego, 1990.

²⁵⁹ Among such regions were Zaza in Gisaka (1900) known to be the location of the ritualist, the keepers of the 'Constitution' of the monarchy, the Abiru; Mibirizi (1903) and Rambura (1913), the region assigned to provide the diviners; Rulindo (1910), assigned to provide the crops, *uburo* for the feasts of harvest, *umuganura*.

were largely peasants, deeply rooted in the countryside and in the social fabric. In fact, the country had no urban tradition (more or less than 10% of the population lived in cities in 1990s). However, in contrast to Kevin Ward's accurate remarks on Uganda²⁶⁰ the chiefs were forcibly Catholic while the peasantry remained divided between Catholics and Protestants.

From the beginning of evangelisation to 1930, the court and the majority of the ruling class had resisted conversion. This was of course a dilemma to Lavigerie's missiology of converting the ruling class first. The affirmation commonly admitted that the first Rwandans to convert to Catholicism during the German period were the Bahutu is untrue. Such an affirmation belonged to a constant identification in the missionaries reports and publications at the time, of the Batutsi with the chiefs. These two terms, however meant two different realities²⁶¹.

From a sociological point of view, Protestants tended to be more in peripheral and less economical developed areas whereas Catholics were found both in rural areas and near the administrative centres. The appearance of Protestant in cities is a recent phenomenon of the 1970s generated by a competition started by the Pentecostals. Lastly, all together shared the tendency to associate the elements of cultural and historical patrimony with the ruling class. It appears clearly that there was a competition for the monopoly not only of the geographical territory, but also spiritual, cultural, social and political realities which would be utilised as factors for religious rivalry. We must complete this section by saying that, the French background would become an asset for the Catholic Church because after the First World War, their missionaries could pursue their activities whilst the German Protestant missionaries were forced to leave²⁶².

III.2. Inherited Theology of Missionaries

The early development of Christianity in Rwanda has been marked by three aspects. First, the socio-cultural, political and religious contexts of the Europe which influenced the missionaries. The second factor was the influence of three men; on the Catholic side, Cardinal Lavigerie, the founder of the White Fathers Order and Mgr Classe, the Apostolic Vicar of Rwanda, 1907 to 1945 and, on the Protestant side, Dr Johanssen, the founder of the

²⁶⁰ Ward, K., "Ethnicity, Religion and Politics in Uganda". Paper Presented in Edinburgh-Yale Group, Edinburgh, 1996,p.3.

²⁶¹ Mbonimana,G& Ntezimana,E., "L'Implantation des Missions Chrétiennes. Les Pères Blancs et les Missionnaires de la Mission de Bethel". In Honke,G., Au plus Profond de l'Afrique, Le Rwanda et la Colonisation Allemande, 1884-1919, Wuppertal: Peter Hammer Veralag, 1990,p.133. According to Nahimana, 1987, the movement started in 1917 with the conversion of chief Naho of Marangara near Kabgayi and chief Cytatarire of Bwanamukari who was nephew of king Musinga. Nahimana,F., Le Blanc est Arrivé, le Roi est Parti, Kigali: Printer Set, 1987.

²⁶² At the time they had to leave, the Protestant had managed to create five stations. These were entirely left in the sole hands of the newly Rwandan converts. When the SBMPC took over in 1921, two stations, Zinga and Kiteme on Idjwi Ireland had ceased their activities and were never recovered. Actually, despite the petitions of the monarch of the Idjwi together with his population who wanted to be reintegrated to Rwanda (Johanssen, p.58), the Ireland became part of Congo (Zaire).

Bethel mission in Rwanda. The next factor to consider is the view of the missionaries on peoples of Rwanda.

III.2.1. Impact of European Contexts on Early Missionaries

The missionaries who arrived in Rwanda at the beginning of this century were marked first, by different theories in social science, in particular socio-Darwinism and the new science of anthropology as well as the historical and ideological developments such as the ideas of colonialism. Father Heremans, a Belgian historian, argues that all sectors of society were on what can be considered as the 'present day right'. The Church was at the extreme right. No one would consider that colonisation was a disputable enterprise at any stage²⁶³.

In fact, the schema of interpretation of history which has been applied to many regions of the world always gave primacy to racial conquests. According to Dominique Franche, it flourished in France in the 16th century with the myth presenting the French nobles as descending from the Franks who came from Franconie, in Germany in opposition to the 'roturiers'('peasants!') descending from the Gallo-Romans. The theory was adopted and reproduced by the nobles who embraced it. The staunchest of this theory was Henry Boulainvilliers who influenced Jean - Joseph Gobineau. The French revolution in 1789 then came as the reverse of the conquest, the revenge of the 'roturiers' of Gallo-Romans against the foreigners of Franconie²⁶⁴. These theories have been adapted in Rwanda and the Great Lakes Africa region. The missionaries would constantly refer to Rwandan society as resembling the Middle Ages in Europe of the lords, nobles, vassals, 'roturiers'. as indicated in the following passage quoted from Basil Davidson:

Before the 19th century however, these lord-and-vassal system composed a structure that was based, at any rate ideally on a two-way exchange on benefits. Whilst Tutsi nobles gossiped among their equals, sipping honeydew and arguing the wisdom of the ages, or leaned upon their spears while composing verse in praise of their courage, virtue and authority, the humble Hutu laboured at their gates in producing food and bearing burdens. Yet the Hutu and their kind also had their expectations. For the Tutsi nobles and their like were under obligation to assume not only the responsibilities of government, but also those of defence, Just as the women of medieval France preferred themselves to vow to strong masters, seeing in this their best assurance of safety and protection so did the fearing peoples of these inland kingdom thing it wise to make themselves the tribute paying vassals of men whom warfare and government were a professional duty²⁶⁵.

The idea of Rwandan society resembling to the Middle Ages Europe was highlighted again and again. The notions of 'nobles' and 'roturiers' have been extensively utilised in by the colonial and missionary agents in the new field where they would associate all the Batutsi to the rulers and owners of the cattle. To put it the way the colonial administration mirrored the thinking of the missionaries, they wanted to have a 'social elite' from the Batutsi group, capable of supporting 'our civilisation', thus wanted to create Rwandan society as hierarchised as European society was in the 18th century²⁶⁶.

²⁶³ Heremans, R., op.cit. 1996, p. 18

²⁶⁴ Franche, D., *Rwanda. Généalogie d'un Génocide*, Paris: Editions Mille et une Nuits, 1997, pp.32/33.

²⁶⁵ Davidson, B., *Africa in History*, London: Allen Lane, 1978, pp. 150ff.

²⁶⁶ Fathers Arnoux and Classe in sections 3.1. and 4.1.

The missionaries were marked by conservative and anti-ecumenical theologies. Such a context led the missionaries into a double mistaken path: one, in the course of evangelising the ruling class before the Protestants and Muslims came in, they associated the Gospel with the powerful; two, Christianity arrived divided and made a negative impact on a society which did not know them before and on people who needed the examples of unity and love. Father van der Meersch points out the fact that the 18th and 19th centuries European theologies (Catholic) which influenced the missionaries lacked an ecumenical vision²⁶⁷; they were inspired by a defensive line against Protestantism, then the Jansenism and modernism. They wholly depended on the theologies taught in the seminaries reflecting the disunion with the Oriental Churches and the Protestant Reformation fracture. Equally, they were disconnected from the biblical sources: the very tool for faith was the philosophy of Aristotle adapted by Thomas Aquinas, with a very technical vocabulary²⁶⁸.

III.3. Images Given to Rwandan Society

Like colonists, from the very beginning the missionaries developed two firm convictions: on the one hand, the theory of a Hamite race and on the other, a selection from that Batutsi community of an elite designed to assist them in promoting 'western civilisation'. In fact, the Hamites/Batutsi dominant and the Bahutu 'indigenous' dominated, and the Batwa who accounted for nothing were the prevalent images in the early descriptions of the Banyarwanda people²⁶⁹.

III.3.1. Hamite Myth as Factor of Conception and Misconception of Rwanda

In the interlacustrine African region, the images of the Batutsi warriors, giants of Semitic origin, kin to the White race, and dominating the indigenous populations has been nurtured in the literature of the first western explorers, anthropologists, missionaries and colonial agents. These images have not disappeared in contemporary writings as indicated in chapter one.

With regard to its application to Rwanda, the major settings of the Hamite myth were elaborated from the 1880s. According to Gudrun Honke, Captain Speke (1861) and Henry Morton Stanley (1871)²⁷⁰ were the first explorers who, from the south-west of Uganda, collected stories, myths and legends from voyagers about the Banyarwanda people. Two major sources were used. First, the Ugandans who told of the images left by Rwabugiri, the warrior king of Rwanda who had occupied their country. The second source was the Arab slave traders. These described the population who resisted strongly and prevented them from entering Rwanda.

Speke described Rwanda as a country in the hands of foreign invaders, of Galla origin from Abyssinia and Asia.

²⁶⁷ Van der Meersch (Father). *Le Catéchuménat au Rwanda. De 1900 à nos Jours*, Kigali: Pallotti Presses 1993.

²⁶⁸ Van der Meersch op.cit. pp. 136/7.

²⁶⁹ Administration Coloniale du Ruanda-Urundi, *Rapport 1925*, p.34.

²⁷⁰ Honke, G., "Au plus Profond de l'Afrique. Européens et Rwandais font Connaissance". In Honke, G., (ed.), op.cit. p.82.

In the countries the government is in the hands of foreigners, who had invaded and taken possession of them, leaving the agricultural aborigines to till the ground, whilst the junior members of the usurping clans herded cattle- just as in Abyssinia, or wherever the Abyssinians or Gallas have shown themselves- There, a pastoral clan from the Asiatic side took the government of Abyssinia from its people and have ruled over them ever since, changing by intermarriage with the Africans, the texture of their hair and colour to a certain extent, but still maintaining a high stamp of Asiatic feature, of which a marked characteristic is a bridged instead of bridles nose²⁷¹.

Speke was part of an expedition organised from Aden by the Government of Bombay commanded by Lt Burton assisted by Lt. Herne, Speke and Stragan. Like Stanley, Speke was searching the sources of river Nile. He crossed the horn and east Africa from Berbera to Lake Edward, in the interlacustrine region²⁷². It is not clear why Speke accepted uncritically the accounts of the Hamites and of Gallas who would have emigrated from Ethiopia or Somalia toward Rwanda; he had crossed these regions where no source either the chronologies (which in the case of Ethiopia were written), nor the oral traditions, recount the migrations.

Thirty years later in 1894, the second European to enter Rwanda Gustav Adolf Duc von Götzen gave a description that would be repeated again and again:

A strange Semitic or Hamitic aristocratic caste, whose ancestors originated from Gallaland, in South of Abyssinia, and had occupied the regions of the Great Lakes. The country is divided into provinces or districts, under the exploiting rule of the Tutsi. Their giant figures, with a height of more than two meters, remind one of the world of fairy tales. At the top of the regime stands the king who restlessly is travelling in the country where he has his residence in every part²⁷³.

Like Speke, von Gotzen accounts of a "strange Semitic or Hamitic caste" society. The background to the passage quoted was the central core Kingdom, a highly organised society, as were various other interlacustrine monarchies which were not necessarily under the "Hamitic aristocratic caste" rule²⁷⁴.

III.3.2. Hamite Theory. Its Genesis and Applications

Before pursuing the reflection on the shaping of Rwandan society by the images dominated by the Hamite theory, it is best to briefly examine the genesis of that concept. The Hamite concept has been created out of some European terminology from the biblical story of Noah, Genesis 9.18-27. The Hamites were descendants of Ham who saw the nudity of his drunk father, Noah. Ham's latest son, Canaan, brother of Cush (the Ethiopian), Mizraim (Misri) and Put, was accursed by Noah when he knew that Ham spied out his nudity (Genesis 10.1-32). It is assumed that later, the Hamites came from Mesopotamia to settle in Egypt, Kusch and Ethiopia. According to C.A.Diop who recounts the sources of Herodote, Diodore of Sicile, Amelineau and other ancient scholars, the ancient Egyptians called themselves Kamit

²⁷¹ Speke, J., *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile*, Edinburgh/London: William Blackwood & sons, 1863, p.247.

²⁷² Leaving Berbera in April 1855 to explore the east Africa, the expedition was attacked by the Somalis. Stragan was killed, Speke wounded, captured but could escape while, Burton also wounded was made hostage, liberated later after negotiations. Deresse, J., *Histoire Sommaire de la Corne Orientale de l' Afrique*, Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1971, p.250. Also consider the fact that the reports of migrations of the Hamites/ Batutsi from Ethiopia have not been substantiated with regard to why in Ethiopia where exist more than 70 ethnic groups, many of them belong to a 'Negro-Bantu' background only the 'Hamites' should have migrated. They never show how they would have faced the proving environmental and human barriers like the Bahr-el Ghazalar marshes

²⁷³ Honke, G., op.cit.pp 97-110.

²⁷⁴ De Lacger (Canon)L., *Rwanda*, 1939, 2nd ed., 1961 quoted by Nahimana, F., 1993, pp. 152; 192; 197.

(Hamites, Black or Ebony). However, nobody, said C.A. Diop, can define exactly the primitive cradle of the Hamites, their language or their route of migrations²⁷⁵.

In his theory on race inequality, Jean Joseph Gobineau (1853-1855) affirmed that the Hamites descended, 5000 years ago from the white superior race in Mesopotamia. Confronted by the black African masses, non Adamic from the south, they should have mixed and diluted. However, many different other sources described the Hamites as tributaries of great civilisations in Africa and founders of other great civilisations in the antiquity (Baron d'Eckstein, 1854; the Dominican Vicwa-Mitra, 1892).²⁷⁶

Such a perception of the origin and the achievements of the Hamites touched the religious circles. For example, a Protestant Theologian, August Knobel of Giessen University wrote in 1850: "the Hamitic peoples, judging from their physical characteristics, belong, with the Japhetites and Semites to the same race of human beings categorised by the naturalists as the Caucasian branch"(Die Volkertafel der Genesis).

In 1870, 68 Fathers of the Catholic Church in their Vatican I Council appealed for a missionary vocation towards the Central Africa region to alleviate "the antique malediction weighing on the shoulders of the misfortunate Hamites inhabiting the hopeless Nigricy"²⁷⁷.

For a long- time the Hamites were rejected at the periphery of humanity. At that time, the Oriental studies and the exegeses were combining with social science theories to deepen the gap between Whites and Blacks²⁷⁸. How then did the Hamites emerge as the "civilising race of Black Africa" as C.G. Seligman put it? Following the Napoleonic wars, the greatest civilisation of Egypt was discovered; and later, the socio-political organisations and institutions and the populations in the interlacustrine region of Africa. The reverse of the sense of the Hamite, according to French Historian J-P Chretien took place in midst of 19th century under the influence of European philosophers. Nevertheless, according to the immediate need, the Hamites would be taken for Whites or at least the African of 'non Black' origin when tracing the Egyptian civilisation; but accursed when the concept applied to the Black civilisations.²⁷⁹

The existence of socio-political organisations in the monarchies of these regions including Buganda, Karagwe, Ankole, Bunyoro, Rwanda, Buha, Burundi as well as human beings whose physical characteristics would not correspond to the stereotypes of the Black people as described in the reports of early travellers and missionaries, constituted a dilemma. The Hamite theory and the technique of physical anthropology were called to the rescue. For many anthropologists such great civilisations could not be the work of 'inferior' beings; there

²⁷⁵ Diop, A., Nations Nègres et Cultures, Paris : Editions Africaines, 1955,p. 62.

²⁷⁶ Chrétien,J.P.,Burundi. Histoire Retrouvée. 25 Ans de Métier d'Historien an Afrique, Paris: Karthala, 1993,p.339.

²⁷⁷ Ibid. p.336.

²⁷⁸ Vallois,H., 'Race'. In Kroeber,A(Ed)., Anthropology Today. An Encyclopedic Inventory, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1953, p.147/8.

²⁷⁹ Diop, Ibid.p.28.

must be a White hand on the back of them. This, possibly, was a shift which led to the "rehabilitation of the Hamites"; after all, Egypt was considered as the land of the Hamites.

From then on, the disturbances created a scholarship which associated any artistic, political and cultural creativity on the Africa to European or Asian origins. The German scholar, Franz Stuhlmann, who, with Emin Pacha, headed an expedition sent by Wissmann, the Commissioner of the Reich, to establish the first contacts with Rwandans, after attempting unsuccessfully in March 1891 to penetrate Rwanda, wrote in 1910 about a monography on the east African handcraft industry that it "should be always necessary to assume that any trait of civilisation in Africa comes from outside, namely Asia"²⁸⁰.

The argument about the Asian origin of most African cultures was inaugurated by Leo Frobenius in 1898. In 1904, it received the support of two other scholars, Graebner and B. Ankermann. In an address presented to the "Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte", on "Kulturkreise und Kulturschichten in Africa" (published in ZFE 37, 1905), Ankermann suggested that a 'culture stream' flowing from Melanesia to West Africa passed through Indonesia and Madagascar, finally reaching West Africa through the Zambesi Valley. He then succeeded in the construction of the following scheme of subsequent culture layers characterised by van Baal and W.E.A. Beek, as 'speculative hypotheses': The nigritic layer, corresponding with old-Australian culture; West Africa culture, mainly East Papuan and Indonesian; in the west Sudan, a layer of unidentified origin, probably from India; a Hamitic or old-Semitic layer in the Sudan, East Africa and South Africa; and a younger Semitic (Arabian) layer in the same areas²⁸¹.

In fact, the period of 'explorations' and evangelisation of the interlacustrine region of Africa coincided with the development of a controversy between religion and social science, due in particular to the Social Darwinism theory²⁸². This theory constituted the base of race supremacy which would group human beings in three categories: a. the White race, superior and developed; b. the less white races, 'developable', in the long term, including the Hamites; c. the primitive, immature Black, good for servitude, who had no organisation²⁸³. The idea of immaturity, primitivity, lawlessness or unhistoricity of Black Africans, present in most of the ethnological scholarship has been expressed by the German Philosopher, Hegel:

All our observation of African man show him as living in a state of savagery and barbarism, and he remains in this state to the present day. The Negro is an example of animal man in all his savagery and lawlessness, and if we wish to understand him at all, we must put aside all our European attitudes. We must not think of a spiritual God or of moral laws; to comprehend him correctly, we must abstract from all reverence and morality, and from everything which we call feeling. All this is foreign to man in his immediate existence, and nothing consonant with humanity is to be found in his character.²⁸⁴

²⁸⁰ Stuhlmann, F., *Handwerk und Industrie in Ostafrika*, Hambourg, 1910, p.77. Quoted by Chrétien, 1993, p.338.

²⁸¹ Baal, J. van & Beek, W.E.A., *Symbols for Communication: an Introduction to the anthropological study of Religion*, Assen : van Gorcum, 1985, pp. 90-92.

²⁸² Vallois, H., op.cit. p. 147.

²⁸³ Ibid. p. 147. See also Karamaga, A., op.cit. 82.

²⁸⁴ Hegel, F., *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History. Introduction : Reason in History*, translated from the German edition of Johannes Hoffmeister by A.H.B. Nisbet, Cambridge/ London, New York : Cambridge University Press, 1975, p. 177. For the Hegel's negative depicting of what he called 'the African race', see also Hegel, F., *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibree, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1956, pp. 95-99. In

A tendency in Hegel's thought which made a prolific scholarship, was to separate the 'Black Africa', he called *Africa Proper* considered as 'unhistorical' from the two other divisions: the north, which he called the 'European Africa', "has always been subject to foreign influences a theatre of world-historical events", and the Egypt, "the land of the Nile", attached to the Euro-Asia, and described as "constituting a focus, as destined to become the centre of a great and independent culture". *Africa proper*, Hegel insisted heavily, "has no historical interest of its own, for we find its inhabitants living in barbarism and savagery, the land of childhood, removed from the light of self-conscious history and wrapped in the dark mantle of night". He pursued in saying that, what he called the *African race* remained in the "state of innocence" or the state of nature "in such that there can be no such thing as a constitution" nor any development or culture. "The earliest reports concerning this continent, pursued Hegel, tell us precisely the same, and it has no history in the true sense of the word. We shall therefore leave Africa at this point, and it needs not be mentioned again. For it is an unhistorical continent, with no movement or development of its own"²⁸⁵.

Hegel's theories covered a range of domains including history, intellectual developments, socio-political organisations, religion, theology and culture whose existence for the Black Africans was out of question. These misconceptions and prejudices, actually developed throughout history and occurring in slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism, they provoked immense psychological, social, moral and cultural destruction. With the huge influence of Hegel on the western philosophy and theology, it is certain that many among the missionaries had read, or were vastly acquainted with such a devastating thinking. Many among the missionaries who brought the Gospel had grown up in such an atmosphere of prejudices and myths with regard to Africa.

III.3.3. The Hamites, a "Civilising Race of Africa"!

Part of the dilemma would be to trace the authorship of the 'impressive' socio-political organisations in the interlacustrine region. Charles Gabriel Seligman, one of the most influential ethnologist scholars of this century, from his chair of Ethnology in the University of London,²⁸⁶ has argued that the Hamites, whom he consider to be of Caucasian and Semitic origin, were the "great civilising force of Black Africa"²⁸⁷. Specifically on the interlacustrine region that includes Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, East of Zaire and west of Tanzania, he drew his conclusion:

this long introduction of the philosophy of History, Hegel concludes the section related to Africa in saying: "At this point we leave Africa, not to mention it again. For it is no historical part of the World; it has no movement or development to exhibit. Historical movements in it- that is in its northern part- belong to the Asiatic or European World. What we properly understand by Africa, is the Unhistorical, undeveloped Spirit, still involved in the conditions of mere nature, and which had to be presented here only as on the threshold of the World's History". Ibid. p. 99.

²⁸⁵ Ibid. p. 190.

²⁸⁶ G.C. Seligman taught among other future distinguished ethnologists such as Bronislaw Malinowski; Isaac Schapera; S.F. Nadal; E.E.Evans-Pritchard; Meyer Fortes; Raymond Firth-

²⁸⁷ Seligman,c., *African Races*, London: Thornton Butterworth, 1930 reprinted up to 1970.

No doubt it is at least in part due to this Caucasian influence that we find the curious mixture of primitive and advanced elements in the social institution of the interlacustrine communities²⁸⁸.

While Seligman insisted on the Caucasian origin of the Hamites, the missionaries, Catholic and Protestant, worked hard to show that the Batutsi ('Hamites') brought everything that was valuable from outside, Asia, Egypt or Ethiopia. Father Arnoux put it as follows:

Manifestement apparentés aux Abyssins, les Batutsi vinrent au Rwanda très longtemps après les autres races. Ceux d'entre eux qui descendent de souche nomade se reconnaissent à leur figure sémitique, à leurs traits fins, réguliers, à leur teint bronze plutôt que noir, à leur sveltesse mais surtout à leur taille élevée... Les bovins, voilà bien surtout par quoi les Batutsi exercent leur domination sur les races inférieures, dans le cadre d'un système féodal équivalent exact de celui qui a fleuri au moyen âge. En vue d'en obtenir protection, secours variés, vaches, le Muhutu se met à la remorque d'un Seigneur puissant, chef ou non, se proclamant son homme, son serf²⁸⁹.

For Father Delmas, the Hamites of Rwanda themselves divide into four categories: a. the true nobles descending from sky- a thesis that meets the myth of ibimanuka of Kagame-; b. the hybrids of the indigenous Bahutu rulers and the Hamites; c. the nobles of unknown clans; d. the Batutsi of foreign origin²⁹⁰. As such, the theories of race purity end in an impasse which even in the present day remains unresolved. No Rwandan, be they of Hamites or Bahutu, can claim to be authentic.

But did the missionaries ignore the existence of petty Batutsi, simple peasants who were exploited by the ruling class in the same conditions as their fellow Bahutu? For being in contact with the peasantry, I will suggest, they were fully aware of this reality. But they took a step further to associate the Batutsi social class with rulers. On the one hand, many were products of the cultural background. On the other, most of the missionaries were part of the colonial project whose essence is: 'divide and rule'.

III.3.4. Physical Anthropology as Promoter of the Hamite Theory

The caricatures and stereotypes have dominated the missionary literature in the region over the years. These stereotypes operated on the imagery from the misconceptions designed by the early explorers through a binary opposition between Bahutu and Batutsi.²⁹¹

Physical anthropology was called on to justify the theories. In 1902, Father Leon Classe (future bishop) wrote that: "les Batutsi sont des hommes superbes, aux traits fins et réguliers, avec quelque chose du type aryen et du type sémitique". In 1917, Father Francois Menard wrote that the "Mututsi est un europeen sous une peau noire"²⁹², an assertion reiterating Dr Baumann's remark mentioned below.

²⁸⁸ Seligman, op.cit.214.

²⁸⁹ Arnoux, A., *Les Pères Blancs aux sources du Nil*, Paris, 1948, P. 24. In Muzungu, B., 'Préjugés des Races', Kigali: *Cahier du Centre Saint Dominique*, 1996, p.25.

²⁹⁰ Delmas, L., *Généalogie de Noblesse Batutsi du Rwanda*, Kabgayi, 1950. Quoted in Muzungu, B., 1995, pp. 43-45.

²⁹¹ Franche, D., *Rwanda. Généalogie d'un Génocide*, Paris: Editions Milles et Une Nuits, 1997, p. 32/3; 47/8.

²⁹² Classe, L., in "Missions d'Afrique des Pères Blancs", Sept. 1902, p. 385; Menard, F., 'Les Barundi', archives des Pères Blancs, Rome, par Gahama, J., *le Burundi sous Administration Belge*, Paris, 1983, P.275. Quoted in Chrétien, 1985, p.138.

In the 1920s and 1930s, the colonial authorities carried out studies which fixed the populations into distinctive 'races' out of the metric measurements of the height, the nose, the face, the weight. The procedure, however, did not work the way the authors wanted it because in various regions of Burundi and Rwanda as well, people did not fit in the prototype model of the Black man/woman. Hence, the conclusion was that the populations were hybrids²⁹³. For the theoreticians of the Hamite myth physical characteristics were associated with moral, civic, intellectual ability and mental capacities. Hamitic, "those who had good physique", were supposed born-rulers. Dr. O.Bauman, the first European to sojourn in Rwanda (1892), refers to such an idea as a white figure in a black skin. He put it as follows:

Il y avait partout des Watutsi qui surprenaient par leur sveltesse et leur type presque européen. Certains étaient à peine bruns et ont sans doute été à l'origine de la légende des Nègres Blancs. Partout on pouvait différencier très nettement la population nègre indigène des maîtres Wahuma". dont la façon de s'habiller "rappelait les descriptions de figures royales de l'ancienne Assyrie"²⁹⁴.

Speaking on the matter, the editor of the Muyaga Mission in Burundi wrote in the mission diary: "Seryamurungu who surely is less than 25 years old is a better-looking Negro, so good-looking that it would be hard to find a single good looking man on earth. The German emperor should be jealous. A tall, tall man, his traits would make a painter happier". Equally, Mr. Ryckman, who has been Governor of Burundi, describe the Bahutu as offering the classical physical description of the Black²⁹⁵.

The physical anthropology is truly a domain where Africa suffered a lot of prejudices. The tendency was, when difference appeared, to categorize as being not Black all those who presented a good-looking appearance but instead as hybrids Caucasian, even to subdivide the African population into Nilotic, Hamites, Ethiopians, Somalis, Gallas, Bantu, Hottentos, Boshmans, Peuls, 'True Negroes', 'semi-Negroes' and so-forth. These classifications were not really substantiated. Prof. Ki-Zerbo is right to indicate that even the biological criteria which has been a constant reference for centuries does not provide solid evidence. Many different variables both internal and external intervene to influence the morphology of the body²⁹⁶.

III.3.5.The Hamite Theory and Ethnicising of Society

The meaning of the concepts of Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa have been central to the studies of the forming of Rwandan ethnic identity. Neither the oral tradition sources and different official and private literature to which most of the ethnologic studies relied, nor other sources enlighten on the process which led to present day mixture of the population nor the formation of the 'ethnic group'. What has been demonstrated however is that at the eve of colonisation, the terms Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa meant social classes; that either 'ethny'; 'race', 'caste', 'Hamite' were known to Banyarwanda people. People identified themselves by clans. D'

²⁹³ Chrétien, J.P., 1993, p. 336. See also J-F. Dupaquier, "Rwanda. A qui la Faute"? In *L'Événement du Jeudi*. 25 au 31 août 1994, pp.39-51; particularly p.42.

²⁹⁴ Servaes,S., "Etudes ethnographiques du Rwanda". In Honke, G. Op.cit. p.100

²⁹⁵ Ryckman, dans rapport administration colonial, 1925, p.34.

²⁹⁶ Ki-Zerbo, 1978: 24/5; 308; See also Vallois,H., 'Race'. In Kroeber,A., *Anthropology Today*, Chicago: Chicago Univeristy Press, 1953, p. 148; 159 and Bates, M., 'Human Ecology', Ibid. p. 711.

Hertefelt put it as follows: "Le problème peut être formulé en termes mathématiques simples. Il y a 18 clans multi-classes; il y a 3 classes sociales qui constituent respectivement 83% (Hutu); 16% (Tutsi) et 1% (Twa) de la population".²⁹⁷

D'Hertefelt unequalled survey showed, I have suggested, that even within the clans habitually considered as mostly Batutsi dominance, the proportions were as follows: Banyiginya: Bahutu= 57.50%, Batutsi= 42.27%; Bega, Bahutu= 78.22%, Batutsi= 21.36%²⁹⁸. D'Hertefelt demonstrates that one of the major problem of Rwanda has been the 'ethnicising' of the clans by ethnologists, including Father Kagame²⁹⁹.

Subscribing to the logic of the Hamite theory from his masters, the missionaries, in particular, Classe, Schumacher, Canon de Lacger, Pages and Delmas, Father Kagame developed three arguments defending a thesis according to which all the clans had a Batutsi ('Hamite') origin³⁰⁰. Firstly, Kagame resolves the intermarriage reality in affirming that the pre-Banyiginya ('Hamite') clans were Batutsi because the Banyiginya -whom he asserts as being Batutsi whilst the oral tradition to which he found his studies did make no distinction- took for wives their daughters³⁰¹.

After the assumption of the clans being of Batutsi background, Kagame developed a second argument based on the military conquests. For him a country has opposed a strenuous resistance to the Banyiginya conquest if it had a Hamite monarch. This, he applied to the monarchy of the Babanda in Nduga³⁰².

²⁹⁷ D'Hertefelt, op.cit.pp.3; 49.

²⁹⁸ D'Hertefelt does not deny that Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa should have come from different origins, but he indicates that they had become social categories who share several cultural, social and religious factors.

²⁹⁹ One of the most learned Rwandan priests, Father Kagame was named among the influential ritualists, keepers of the tradition of the monarchy (the Abiru) by King Mutara III Rudahigwa, in 1943. He was assigned to write the History of the Banyiginya dynasty (Nahimana, 1993). Kagame used this influence to collect, treat and publish enormous material of oral tradition literature. However, he has been criticised to write the social-history of Rwanda in the vision of the reigning dynasty, the Banyiginya clan.

³⁰⁰ Kagame, 1943; 1952.

³⁰¹ D'Hertefelt shows that the marriages between the clans had always existed from Banyiginya Batutsi chiefs espousing daughters of local groups which according to his information were Batutsi as the reciprocal was also true. D'Hertefelt, 1971,p.29. In the same line, Father Muzungu shows with a degree of persuasiveness that the mixing of the population is rooted in the Rwandan culture and that the exogamy is a rule between the clans and ethnies. Though the Batwa constituted an exception, it is obvious that the Batwa women made children with princes in the Court. On the other side, there were also ennobled Batwa who married among the Batutsi as in the example of the vast community of the *Basyete*. Muzungu is right to say that today's population of Rwanda resulted from a mixing to such an extent that it would be not realistic for anyone to claim to be of pure blood. Muzungu, 1995,p.24.

Some other people may have different views. Father A. Sibomana for example considers that there were many resemblance but also differences between the Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa. A. Sibomana identifies as difference the following aspects: each person belongs to an ethnic group and he/she knows it; the tradition of poetry in the royal court and big courts did not exist among the Bahutu; there was a socialisation in the culture of difference with the discourse like 'do not eat like the Muhutu'; the Batutsi had sexual exploits while the Bahutu were abstinent and lastly, the Bahutu and Batutsi differ in physical characteristics! Sibomana, A., *Gardons Espoir pour le Rwanda*, Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1997, pp.129-134. No one needs to be an anthropologist to see that what Sibomana considers as differences are feelings and cultural dynamics of families which cannot be taken for factors of ethnic boundaries.

³⁰² To this supposed warrior superiority of the Batutsi which is also the thesis of Maquet and de Heusch, D'Hertefelt wisely responded that the mountainous populations of the north, Buhoma, Bushiru, Mulera, Buberuka, Rukiga, and in the south-west: Busozo, Bukunzi, known as Bahutu monarchies, would have been pure Batutsi because their resistance was only ended by the German and Belgian colonial administration in the beginning of the 20th century. Mgr Bigirimwami in his intervention recounted in sections below says the same thing.

Thirdly, for Kagame, the pre-Banyiginya groupings were Batutsi/Hamites because the Banyiginya monarchs accorded a particular attention to them³⁰³. For example, to prove that the Bagesera clan of the ancient Gisaka were Hamites, Kagame wrote:

étaient, et ils restent toujours des Hamites de première qualité. Ils avaient un tambour dynastique reconnu par les dynasties voisines, et son code ésotérique (rituel) imposait le respect, même à nos monarques du Rwanda qui, après l'annexion du Gisaka, tinrent à liquider cérémonieusement et légalement le symbole d'une lignée hamitique vaincue. Aucun tambour dynastique des roitelets vraiment autochtones ne préoccupa nos monarques, puisque ces dynasties purement Bantu n'avaient pas ce code ésotérique dont les Hamites seuls possédaient le secret³⁰⁴.

The Bagesera was one of the 18 clans. Their land, Gisaka, was conquered by the central kingdom of the Banyiginya dynasty in the end of the last century. Among other explanations advanced by Kagame, those clans had a royal ritual code in which the Banyiginya alone had a monopoly. In fact, neither the possession of the royal symbols, rituals and chieftaincies were the monopoly of the Hamites as proved in the interlacustrine ethnohistorical and sociological literature. Rather, the facts show that most of the 'Hamite kingdoms' were built upon local 'Bantu groupings'³⁰⁵.

The presence in a same clan of the members of the three social classes enlightens the social mobility factor and the fact that Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa concepts had originally a social class meaning before acquiring an ethnic connotation. Unlike Kagame, other defenders of the Hamite theory admitted that the three concepts had originally socio-classe meaning. Canon de Lacger explains it as follows:

Mutusi et Muhutu sont des mots qui tendent à perdre leur sens proprement racial et à n'être plus que des qualificatifs des étiquettes sur lesquelles se rangent capitalistes et travailleurs, gouvernants et gouvernés, sans toutefois que le préjugé de la naissance soit sérieusement entamé. Un 'petit Mutusi', n'ayant pas de quoi satisfaire les exigences 'pécuniaires' d'un beau-père éventuel de son monde, est obligé de se rabattre sur le milieu de paysans. Il y prendra femme; et si la gêne de sa maison se prolonge, si ses fils et petits-fils sont contraints d'en passer par les mêmes nécessités mortifiantes, sa famille se verra progressivement éliminée de la société des gens 'comme il faut'; elle tombera dans la rotture. 'La réciprocité est non moins fréquente'. Le Muhutu capable de fournir une vache à son beau-père peut trouver femme chez les Batutsi d'opulence médiocre; avec le temps et la prospérité croissante, sa descendance sera tenue pour issue de la bonne maison.³⁰⁶

This passage reactivates the idea of Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa concepts having originally been a socio-economical meaning or at least, that they experienced a social mobility at the end of the last century. Nevertheless, Kagame pursued his theorising on the distinctiveness of the Hamites supremacy. He extended his hypotheses to a group known in the oral tradition as the *Abarenge*, and considered as anterior to the current population in Rwanda. According to him, they lived in Rwanda, Burundi and East of Zaire (see same roots with Abanyamurenge). They were, according to him, owners of cattle; they still have representatives of Batutsi

Nahimana studied the monarchies of the Mukungwa corridor identical to d'Hertefeldt's list, founded, according to Nahimana by the "Babanda of the Nduga kingdom who escaped from the genocide massacres of the Batutsi Banyiginya". Nahimana, 1993, op.cit. p.83.

³⁰³ D'Hertefeldt, 197, p. 31.

³⁰⁴ Kagame, A., *Les Organisations Socio-Familiales de l'Ancien Rwanda*, Brussels: Academie Royale des Sciences Coloniales, 1954, p.55.

³⁰⁵ Lewis, 1966, quoted by d'Hertefeldt, 1971, p.32; de Lacger, L., 1939, 2nd Edition, 1961, pp.83-88 quoted by d'Hertefeldt, p.32. De Lacger whose study makes authority on the scholarship in the matter, was invited by Mgr Classe to assess the achievements of the White Fathers. He came first for three years, then went for longer

³⁰⁶ D'Hertefeldt, p. 58.

background, the Abasinga-Abasangwabutaka (those who were found on the land) clan in the current populations; they were invincible warriors³⁰⁷. With regard to his hypothesis he wrote.

La catégorie de ces Hamites qui a laissé dans le Rwanda un souvenir de puissance inégalée est celui des Abarengé, dénomination calquée sur Rurenge, l'ancêtre éponyme de leur dynastie. On attribue régulièrement à leur civilisation les hoes, les marteaux et les autres objets forges que, fortuitement, mettent au jour les cultivateurs de notre époque, dans certaines zones du pays. Ces Hamites devaient être fortement outillés, beaucoup plus que ne l'étaient les Rwandais modernes....

L'empire des Abarengé débordait largement le Rwanda actuel. Leur dernier souverain légitime résidait à Gishari au Zaïre (Rep.Dem.Congo), tandis que le Burwi, au sud du Rwanda, dernier lambeau séparé du tronc par les conquêtes ultérieures, étaient gouvernés par une dynastie avertissée du même groupe. Les Abarengé étaient du clan des Abasinga= Vainqueurs, ayant le milan pour totem.³⁰⁸

For Kagame, the whole region owe cattle and technologies from these Hamites/ Abarengé of unequal warrior superiority. Kagame's map of the Abarengé was much larger than the Rwandan territory of the end of 19 century which extended to the east of present day R.D.Congo. It is believed that Kagame aimed to reject the theory which took the Batutsi for foreigners³⁰⁹. But then, he ended up in giving intellectual arms to the enemies of the same Batutsi, the enemies of the social harmony. Father Muzungu, a prominent contemporary theologian of inculturation questions Kagame's hypotheses as follows:

Kagame nous dit que les Abarengé sont des Hamites. D'où lui vient cette information? On sait de par ailleurs que Kagame a tendance à faire croire que tous les Basinga sont des Tutsi (Hamites) étant de ce clan lui-même.... Nous avons lui que le terme "abasinga" signifiait "vainqueur". Est-ce le nom qui pousse à croire que ces "vainqueurs" sont Hamites, selon le préjugé qui fait de ceux-ci des "envahisseurs". Nous savons que A. Kagame a accepté le préjugé des "races" (Hutu, Tutsi, Twa) en vogue à son époque. On peut le regretter, mais c'est ainsi.... Que ce soit pour les Bimanuka (those who descended from sky), que ce soit pour les Barenge, que ce soit pour les autres groupes sociaux dit "abasangwa-butaka" (les premiers habitants du pays, rien ne semble indiquer la ligne de démarcation entre ethnie et clan).³¹⁰

The importance given to Father Kagame in this work is meagre in comparison to the implication of the ethnicising of society which developed out of his work and that of the identical school to which this chapter and the two precedent consecrated so much attention. Firstly, Kagame's scholarship had a considerable influence on most of the scholars who wrote on Rwanda including d'Arianoff, Vansina, de Heusch. For decades his theses remained unquestioned, even during a large part of the post- independence regimes³¹¹. Prof. d'Hertefelt notes:

les travaux de Kagame... modifient substantiellement l'optique des premiers ethnohistoriens du Rwanda et même celle de traditions orales les plus officielles. Les conteurs et les commentateurs ruandais de celles-ci, Tuutsi aussi bien que Huutu, qui servaient d'informateurs à Loupias, Pages, de Lacger, Sandrart, Delmas ou Hiernaux, traduisaient l'opinion générale en admettant que certains clans avaient à l'origine une base Hutu (ou tout au moins non-Tutsi) des groupements locaux organisés en "royaume" avant l'expansion des Nyiginya... tout à fait à l'encontre de cette interprétation traditionnelle (laquelle il convient d'y insister ne favorisait pas systématiquement le prestige de la dynastie Tuutsi), Kagame va postuler une origine ethnique Tuutsi pour tous les clans ruandais....³¹²

Secondly, the negative implications of the ideological use of the clan had been predicted in the beginning of the century by Dr Johanssen. In a poignant assessment on the role the clans

³⁰⁷ Kagame, A. *Inganji Karinga*, 1943, pp. 30-31.

³⁰⁸ Ibid. 27-28.

³⁰⁹ See D'Hertefelt, 1971, pp. 29-34; Muzungu, B., "Ethnies et Clans". In Cahier du Centre Saint Dominique. Kigali, 1995, p. 32.

³¹⁰ Muzungu, B., *ibid.* pp. 19-51, in particular, pp. 3-32.

³¹¹ Vidal, C., *La sociologie des passions* (Rwanda, Cote d'Ivoire), Karthala, 1992.

³¹² d'Hertefelt, M., *op.cit.* p. 27.

had in Rwandan society, Johanssen unequivocally and clearly stated the danger which inevitably could result in the dissolution of the clans:

" Les clans n'ont pas de résidences délimitées. Il m'est impossible de dire si, outre la communion sacrificielle, il existe encore d'autres intérêts collectifs. Mais il faut quand même admettre que les associations claniques transmettent d'une génération à l'autre les vieux usages et les vieilles coutumes, et qu'ils conservent la spécificité nationale contre le mélange et le déclin. Plus il est facile, par dissolution du mariage et par la polygamie, de défaire le lien familial au sens strict du terme, plus on gagne en importance - cela ne fait pas de doute - en [préservant] la communion ferme, indissoluble, orientée religieusement que représente le clan. Avec la destruction de cette communion, tout le peuple croulerait et se résoudrait en individus isolés qui seraient livrés à n'importe quelle influence"³¹³.

The influence of all sort predicted by Johanssen have come from overwhelmingly both external and internal scholarships. First, as Rwandan society was built upon the federations of the clans which were indistinctly made of Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa lineages, the process of ethnisation has constituted an ideological time bomb that exploded and destroyed the 'national communion'. Second, with regard to Kagame's, Claudine Vidal is right to point out that his work contributed to create the 'histoire ressentiment'. But as discussed in this thesis he was only one link of the chain.

III.4. Catholic Missionaries and "Race" Considerations

III.4.1. The Legacy of Cardinal Lavigerie

The Catholics were the products of the movement of restoration of Christianity in North Africa created by Lavigerie. The latter left his see in Nancy (France) and decided to re-evangelise the north of Africa whose glorious Christianity was extinguished by the Muslim conquests during the 7th century of our era. Later, Lavigerie was distressed by the misery of the Black people enslaved by the traders in human beings. Out of the reports of the caravans he had sent to Central Africa and also from the accounts of the first explorers, including Smith, Speke and Livingstone, the cardinal formed his own idea for the foundation of the "Christian Kingdom in the heart of Africa".

Despite his good will, the conception the cardinal had of the African populations was made out of the short cut that characterised the analyses of African societies and peoples by the explorers. Like many of his contemporaries, he was influenced by intolerant theologies. In the first instance, he was persuaded that Africans had no idea of God. In 1879, Lavigerie summarises his opinion with regard to Africans' religiosity:

D'après les récits de voyageurs, il est douteux que les Nègres de l'intérieur aient, sur une autre vie et sur l'immortalité de l'âme, des idées quelconques. Dans tous les cas, ils ne paraissent avoir aucune religion, mais seulement des superstitions grossières, sans forme quelconque de culture, et qui ressemblent à de la sorcellerie. L'idée de Dieu elle-même est aussi chez eux tellement vague, que certains explorateurs ont pu dire qu'ils n'en avaient point ».³¹⁴

The Cardinal's opinion changed over time due, in particular to different other views he received. Among other nuanced views, Father Livinhac who evangelised Uganda had written

³¹³ Johansses, op.cit. Book I, pp. 41/2.

³¹⁴ Lavigerie, C., Cardinal, *Premieres et Deuxiemes Instructions aux missionnaires de l'Afrique Equatoriale* (1878 et 1879) & *Lettres variees dans 'Instructions aux Missionnaires'*, Maisson -Carree, 1939; ou *Lettres Chretiennes*, ed. Grasset, 1966. Quoted by Van der Meersch, *Le catéchumat au Rwanda, de 1900 à nos Jours*, Kigali: Pallotti Presse 1993, pp.129-130.

a relatively balanced report : "Les Baganda connaissent l'existence de Dieu, des démons, et les grandes lois de l'ordre naturel... Ces pauvres gens sont assurément moins mauvais que les Romains et les musulmans". Then the cardinal adjusted his attitude and confessed his misconception:

Je dois l'avouer, je suis profondément ému et surpris de cette délicate disposition religieuse que, d'après votre rapport, on peut constater chez vos néophytes. C'est en complète contradiction avec les idées de tous les explorateurs sur les autres Africains et avec celles qui furent les vôtres dans le passé »...Nous savons très bien, et nous l'affirmons avec force, que les Africains sont non seulement nos frères, mais aussi que le très grand nombre des peuples africains est extraordinairement réceptif à la culture spirituelle, religieuse et morale quoi que l'on puisse en dire ³¹⁵.

The exploitation of the religious factor highlighted in the two precedent passages was part of a system of conceptions and misconceptions under the process of 'humiliation' of Black Africans. It reminds the Vatican I appeal for the alleviation of the "malediction weighting on the shoulders of the Hamites inhabiting the Nigrity". Cardinal Lavigerie, in his instructions to his missionaries for the evangelisation of the Black people³¹⁶ maintained two core principles which, apparently were motivated by the desire to face the supposed lawlessness and the absence of "spiritual God or moral law" underlined in Hegel's passage: a. a progressive teaching commencing with the essential truths ; b. a teaching structured on the model of the primitive Church. In the first case, the cardinal believed that for "primitive people attached to the traditional tales, there was no better method than the historical model". The latter consists in "telling without deep reflection other than those which come by their own, the history of religion and of the Church". As they (Black) "had miserable idea of God, the soul and immortality and lower morals " noone would be admitted to baptism without a four years persistent religious instruction.

With regard to the second principle, the missionaries had to apply the primitive discipline of three different orders : the postulants to whom would be solely given the fundamental truths ; the catechumens who would receive the essential truths of Christianity without referring to sacraments nor baptism ; and lastly the *believers* from whom no secret would be kept³¹⁷. In the new instructions of 1879, Lavigerie endorsed the principle of keeping the young converts designed to assist the missionaries in the stations to avoid them being influenced by malpractice without however detaching them from their context i.e. sending them to Europe. The cardinal who was influenced by the developments of the Church in Middle Age estimated that Christianity was stable once adopted by the authorities. He would recommend to his missionaries to first convert the ruling class who would bring the masses. In the Rwandan perspective, the plan set up aimed to develop a social elite which would be the highlight of the western civilisation. A man who is known for having imprinted his mark on that process is Mgr Classe.

³¹⁵ Ibid. p.66.

³¹⁶ It must be remembered that by Africans, missionaries meant people of 'Bantou roots' Negroes as the Batutsi were considered as Hamites.

³¹⁷ Van der Meersch, op.cit. pp.64-73.

III.4.2. The Influence of Mgr. Classe

Since 1908, Kabgayi, headquarters of the Vicariate became an unavoidable centre in the decision-making of the colony.³¹⁸ One person who played a prominent role was Father Classe, head of the Church from 1907 to 1945.³¹⁹ Born in Metz, France, Classe arrived in Rwanda in 1901. In 1907 he became Vicar Delegate and from then started a career that mingled with the mission of Rwanda. In 1922, he was appointed bishop and continued to head the Church up to his death in 1945. A hard worker, Classe applied with a military rigor the instructions from his superiors; he was determined to influence the decision-making bodies. In this last role, he campaigned for the retrocession of the Gisaka district- as did Henri Anet, the General Secretary of the SBMPC- to Belgium from the British empire. The district was reintegrated to Rwanda in 1924. Classe participated in several other official missions including the removal of King Musinga and his replacement by his son, Rudahigwa.

From the second half of 1920s as earlier said, the close links between the colonial authorities and the missionaries were marked by the integration in the colonial administration report of many sections comprising the "reports provided by their 'Grandeur' the Vicars of Rwanda (Mgr.L. Classe) and Burundi (Mgr J.Gorju), and pastors E.Durand (SBMPC) and Monnier (Adventist) and the CMS".³²⁰ Hence, there was a formal co-operation between the missionaries and the colonisers in promoting and propagating the ideas on 'race' identity and other matters.

III.5. Protestants and "Race" Considerations

Like their contemporaries, the Catholics, Protestant missionaries had a similar Batutsi bias. The 'Watutsi' (pastoralists), were described as a race superior to the Bahutu and the Batwa; they impressed intellectually and spiritually. A marker figure in the implantation and the development of Rwandan Protestantism has been Dr Johanssen of the Bethel mission.

III.5.1. Bethel Missionaries: Johanssen's Influence

Dr Johanssen, arrived in 1907 accompanied by Tanzanians from Bukoba (Tanzania), his first field of mission. E. Johanssen worked in Tanzania and Rwanda and later became Head of the Bethel Missionary work in Bukoba and Rwanda. According to Klaus Fiedler, his spiritual background, like that of the Bethel mission was the Evangelical Revival which had a centre in Bethel³²¹. His Lutheran theology made it easier for Johanssen to see the values of African

³¹⁸ Ibid. p.25. See also report of the colonial administration which described a 1928 visit of his highness, Leopold, heir to the throne at Kabgayi, headquarters of the Vicariate as 'triumphant'.

³¹⁹ Father, then Mgr Classe who carried out rigorously the idea of Cardinal Lavigerie was born in France, Metz. He was ordained priest in 1900 in Carthage and spent a year as secretary to the superior of the White fathers, Mgr Livinhac. He was then sent to Rwanda where he arrived in 1901.

Muvala: op.cit., p. 25/6.

³²⁰ Rapport Administration coloniale Ruanda-Urundi, 1927, p. 46.

³²¹ Fiedler, K., op.cit. p.64.

cultures; the first Reader he published in Kinyarwanda, contained many Rwandan tales and stories, an initiative which pleased the King of Rwanda, Musinga.

For a long time the Bethel Mission could not separate its work from the German colonial activities. In fact until 1891 the mission was confined to the coastal strip, spending much of its energies for the Germans in that area. It is when Pastor Bodelschwingh took over and combined the direction of the Bethel institutions and the Mission that the Evangelical spirit of Bethel gained dominance at the same time buried its imperialistic character³²².

As head of the mission in Bukoba and in Rwanda, Johanssen was quite willing to accept the existing social order. This went so far that on 24 October 1891 he, together with his colleague Wohlrab, went in to battle besides the warriors of Chief Kinyashi who had donated a plot of land at Mlalo, Tanzania, against a supposed Teita attack. They justified their alliance with the chief in saying that in Germany, they would not hesitate to follow a general call up³²³.

Johanssen was critical towards those among his colleagues and contemporaries who thought the 'indigenous' were unable to understand Christian doctrine and became Christians. " Nous devenons quelque peu rétifs, lorsqu'on exige de nous que nous reconnaissons d'office le bien-fondé de la phrase sur l'incapacité du Noir devant la compréhension du Christianisme, surtout lorsque celui qui a émis cette affirmation n'a lui-même pas compris le Christianisme et sa force mystérieuse"³²⁴.

Johanssen declares that such an affirmation challenges him in one thing: to deeply analyse what was needed to become a Christian. He then set up the basic tenets of missionary activities in six principles³²⁵. In these tenets, in particular the second, fourth and fifth, there was no question of the Protestant mission questioning the existing socio-political order; in fact he would stress the need for obedience to the established authorities even if judged from the perspective of the Gospel there was a need to insist that the systems reflect more Love and Justice of God for all inhabitants.

This leaves the feeling that Johanssen's positive comment about his conviction that the indigenous were capable of understanding Christian doctrine was unlikely inclusive. It seems that all the three communities of the Banyarwanda people were not concerned. In fact, his approach in evangelisation and his understanding of social relations were, like his contemporary Catholics, hierarchically oriented. In fact, in Rwanda, he did much to keep good contacts with King Musinga, visiting him in the capital, Nyanza. He tried unsuccessfully to convert the monarch and his entourage. During a session at Nyanza with King Musinga and the members of his entourage, he was distressed when the Batutsi chiefs refused to accept his idea of converting to Christianity, arguing that they knew God, Imana.

³²² Ibid. p.66.

³²³ Ibid. p. 66.

³²⁴ Johanssen, Memoirs, book II.P.83.

³²⁵ Fiedler, K., op.cit. pp.72/73.

He became more confused when the Watutsi qualified Musinga, the King as 'Imana' (divinity).

Then Johanssen confided his confusion to his fellow citizen, Dr Richard Kandt, the German Resident. The latter was not surprised by the Batutsi chiefs' attitude and hesitation to convert, as well as their reference to Imana. For him, the sense of the Watutsi's pride was due to the fact that they came from a different nation which knew Imana (God!). For Dr Kandt, there was a wrong impression which was given to Dr Johanssen that the Watutsi had apparently forgotten Imana (God). That was due to the fact that the cultural, social and religious life of the country were hugely and essentially marked more by Bantu cultural values. The Watutsi had to descend lower themselves to mix with the Bantu (Bahutu!). Kandt send the following comment to Johanssen:

J'ai l'impression que les Watutsi ont apporté ce terme (Imana), dans sa pureté, de leur patrie hamitique, jusqu'à ce que, au cours des siècles, ce terme se soit corrompu sous l'influence des Bantou se trouvant à un niveau plus bas; j'ai l'impression aussi que, spirituellement parlant, les Watutsi ont descendu une pente, lorsque leur langue et leur culture se sont mêlés à celle des Bahutu, ou plus exactement quand elles ont sombré en eux sans laisser des traces³²⁶.

For the German Governor, the idea of God was brought in Rwanda from outside by the Hamites ('Watutsi'). This confirms the observation of Sanders, earlier in this work, that whatever was found valuable in Africa was attributed to the Hamites.

Johanssen came to espouse Kandt's view that the Batutsi were the "clan of Hamitic pastoralists" who arrived from Asia and that they introduced not only the cow but religion and socio-political organisations. In different sections of his Memoirs, Johanssen joined the Catholic missionaries in perceiving a binary opposition between the "two races", in manifesting an admiration of the Watutsi to whom he attributed, an Asian origin and the notion of God. They had a "relatively high representation (of God) that the question arose of knowing if, on this point, and on the mysteries that strangely refer to the cult of Mithras, there was not a manifestation of some Asian influences".³²⁷

With regard to the socio-political and cultural life, Johanssen had not doubt about the superiority of the 'pastoral race'. This, he expressed as follows:

La population du Ruanda se compose organiquement de trois races: les Watutsi, les Bahutu et les Batwa. Les Watusi sont un clan de pasteurs hamitiques qui, par sa stature, par sa couleur et par ses possibilités intellectuelles, se distingue fondamentalement des deux autres races, qu'elle a soumises à sa domination bien qu'il ne repensent sans doute guère qu'un dixième de la population. C'est de cette race que vient le roi. Selon les apparences, les clans de pasteurs hamitiques ne se sont pas bornés à introduire d'Asie en Afrique le bétail à bosse, mais encore des valeurs intellectuelles de différentes natures. Là où ils ont réussi à établir leur domination ils ont par leur légendes et par leur gradations, exercé une influence sur le culte, on peut même sans doute dire, sur toute la vie spirituelle de la population.³²⁸

Though he identified many common determinants such as the clan (which he used interchangeably with 'Watutsi' (sic), Bahutu and Batwa) and many other cultural aspects: proverbs, legends, oral literature, names expressing the notion of God, moral life and tradition, the author admired what he called the "ideology of the Mututsi". There is a sense

³²⁶ Kandt, R., letter of 6.8.1908 to Johanssen. In Johanssen, E., *Impulsions Donnees. Volume II, book I*, P.78.

³²⁷ Johanssen, E., op.cit. livre V. p.56. See also, Fiedler, K., op.cit. p.69 and 70.

³²⁸ *ibid.* p.39

that in his positive approach to local cultures and to the life of the 'indigenous', Johanssen gives less attention to those among the population were considered as 'inferior castes'. Despite his being a man of vision, energy and influence, he used the same prism as his contemporary Roman Catholic colleagues to unquestionably apply the theory of race supremacy. His departure, in 1916, following the defeat of the Germans opened a new chapter to the Société Belge de Missions Protestantes au Congo (SBMPC).

III. 5.2. SBMPC and "Race" Considerations

The Belgian missionaries of the SBMPC³²⁹ arrived following the take over of the Bethel mission stations in 1921 as Belgium was given part of the East African German colonies, namely Ruanda-Urundi, under the 1919 Versailles Treaty. In fact, there have been many different offers from the Anglo-saxon world for the take over of the German Protestant missions. It must be remembered that Musinga had tried to balance the weight of the Catholics in making alliance with the Protestants. The Belgian authorities in Rwanda preferred the American Adventist missionaries to the British; in 1919, the Adventists were then given authorisation to run the Bethel-Bielefeld missionary stations. The field colonial rulers were keen to avoid the inference of the British missionaries that the colonial authorities would not respect scrupulously the principle of indirect rule³³⁰. In Brussels, the opinion was different. They were opposed to the American Adventists perceived as favourable to the promotion of the rights of the Black people³³¹. In 1921, the Government, in particular King Albert I who happened to be Protestant, asked the Belgian Protestant Missions for Congo (SBMPC) to undertake the work.

Due to the state of minority of the Belgian Protestantism, the SBMPC was compelled to recruit missionaries from Switzerland, Belgium and Holland. Because of the different missionaries' background the mission functioned in three independent stations with no coherent theological bases, almost isolated one from another. This lasted up to 1956, when the first national synod opted for a Presbyterian tradition³³². According to the documentation

³²⁹ The Belgian society for Protestant missions in Congo (SBMPC) was created in November 1910 by the Union of Evangelical Protestant Churches of Belgium and the Belgian missionary Christian Church. The aim was to respond to the call for missionary activities in Congo. Due to the absence of missionary experience and resources nobody was ready to go to Congo. The first person who showed the will to open the activities, was Pasteur Anet, a member of the staff was ready to depart in August 1914 when the German troops entered Belgium. In 1921, Past. Anet, visited Bethel and the two missions signed a convention of transfer. Twagirayesu, M & Butselaar, J (ed): *ibid.* p. 78/9.

³³⁰ In fact, in Congo, the colonial authorities had been at open war with some of the British missionaries and humanitarian campaigners. These took a firm stand against Slavery and tortures practised by the Belgian colonial authorities over the local populations. The prominent among the British missionaries who were opposed to the Belgian slavery were Edmund Dene Morel, George Grenfell, Fox-Bourne and their ally, Alfred Emmott, MP were among the prominent opponent to the arbitrary of the 'Congo Free State'. In 1908, the Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey had observed: "No external question for at least thirty years has moved the country so strongly and so vehemently as this in regard to the Congo". Grant, K., "Bringing Slavery Home: Missions, Radical Politics and Imperialism". Research Forum, Cambridge, 6th-7th April 1998, p.26.

³³¹ Administration Coloniale Ruanda-Urundi, *Rapport 1927*, p.51.

³³² See the problematic is analysed in the section referring to the weaknesses of the missions. Absence of missionary experience in Belgium as well as lack of human and material resources. E. Coniot, interview, Liege, 1996.

consulted, the SBMPC had no clear outline of 'races' policies; but the 1927 colonial administrative report indicates that the mission was keen to "support the civilising enterprise started in the colony". Article one of the statutes of the SBMPC reads as follows:

Le but poursuivi et les méthodes d'évangélisation employés par la Société Belge des Missions Protestantes au Congo sont définis dans l'article de son acte de constitution: 'L'Association a pour but essentiel la propagation de l'Evangile au Congo Belge par la création de missions, la traduction et la diffusion de Saintes Ecritures. Elle entend participer ainsi à l'oeuvre nationale de civilisation entreprise dans la colonie'³³³.

The government policies which would be implemented after the Belgian take over were stated by the Minister of the Colonies, J. Frank in his first visit to Rwanda in 1919: "Il ne s'agit pas, sous prétexte d'égalité, de toucher aux bases de l'institution politique; nous trouvons les 'Watutzi' établis d'ancienne date; intelligents et capables; nous respectons cette situation"³³⁴. For the Minister, the Watutzi were the noble class par excellence. They were probably from Asia and would have sojourned in the Pharaonic Egypt. With such a cultural prestige, the Batutsi chiefs were credited with unrestricted possibilities and privileges. These are the policies of the Belgian empire the SBMPC was clearly devoted to promote.

This devotion, however, would put the authorities of the Society in a trap. In 1935 Henri Anet, General Secretary of the SBMPC, together with some other missionary agencies including the CMS, signed a petition addressed to the League of Nations in Geneva protesting against the discriminations facing Protestants from the colonial administration. They accused the government of "terrorising and Catholicising" the Rwandan chiefs. Anet was reprimanded by the board of his mission for not being loyal to his government³³⁵.

Like the Catholics and their own predecessors (the Bethel missionaries), the SBMPC missionaries were admirers of the 'Watutsi' (nobles) as well as the structure of the society. They were desperate to welcome the Batutsi in the missionary stations. This is expressed in a note from pastor von der Hyden in 1925. The then head of the Kirinda station wrote:

Une grande joie m'attendait. D'après les périscope ecclésiastiques, c'était le dimanche de "miséricorde Domini". Ce dimanche de "miséricorde du Seigneur", trois Batutsi (nobles) se sont présentés à moi me demandant le baptême. Il vous sera difficile de comprendre l'importance d'une telle démarche, ne connaissant pas les Batutsi. Ils adorent leur roi, Musinga, un être surhumain qui leur a donné toute richesse et tout bien-être³³⁶.

The conversion of the Batutsi was the battlefield between the missionaries. However, the Protestant missionaries had few means to compete with the Catholics; as indicated in this passage, they were resigned to wait for the Batutsi chiefs to freely join the mission. Whether the Batutsi who joined were all chiefs is questionable; there was a continuing unfortunate association of the Batutsi with the chiefs. This association of the Batutsi, even those exploited by the rulers and colonial system like the rest of the masses, concerns this thesis.

The 1929 SBMPC report presented to the synod assemblies (of the SBMPC tutors' Churches) persisted in showing a high degree of expectations for the Batutsi conversion. The

³³³ Rapport administration coloniale, Ruanda-Urundi, 1927, p.51.

³³⁴ Rumiya, op.cit.p. 138.

³³⁵ Spijker, G., 1997, p. 243.

³³⁶ Butselaar, J & Twagirayesu, M., (ed), op.cit., p.96.

missionaries were eager to welcome and describe at length the conversion of a single Mututsi notable in a missionary station. This is expressed in a note from the head of Rubengera station:

A Rubengera, notre station la plus récente, l'oeuvre religieuse se développe et s'affermi. Les cultes sont suivis par plus ou moins 300 à 400 personnes. Des chefs Batutsi avec leurs fils viennent se mêler à leurs vassaux Bahutu pour entendre le message évangélique³³⁷.

Hence, in their objectives of evangelisation as well as in their attitudes towards the ruling class, the SBMPC missionaries had no problem in believing in the supremacy of the Batutsi. Whether their views were shared with the other Protestant missions, is what we will look at in the next section.

III. 5.3. CMS- Rwanda Missionaries and 'Race' Considerations

The second influential Protestant mission in the land, after the Bethel-SBMPC was the Church Missionary Society- 'Rwanda Mission'. But by the far most, its missionaries have been attached to the Batutsi. They saw in the Batutsi of Rwanda, a key race for the conversion of the central Africa region. Geoffrey Holmes, a former British army officer who came to Uganda before joining Rwanda Mission in Kigeme wrote:

A race of gentlemen, with beautiful physique, undoubtedly as fine as the world produces, keen on games and sports but proud, arrogant and cruel, scornful of anything that savours of manual labour, and yet so superstitious and disappointing in spite of great latent mental abilities³³⁸.

Referring to the activities of the Church Missionary Society including the ongoing work on the translation of the Bible under the co-ordination of Rev Gillebaud, the 1929 SBMPC report revealed that the team has moved to the centre of the country "where the language of Rwanda is more pure". Another influential missionary of the Church Missionary Society was Stanley Smith. He also reported on the translation of the Bible which had started in 1925. 'The Gillebaud' family', he wrote, "have for collaborator an excellent Mututsi nobleman of royal family, Samusoni Inyarubuga".³³⁹ The quote, surely does not provide enough material to draw particular conclusions, but one perceives behind the qualifiers, and the decision to settle near the residence of the royal court, an inclination to the ruling class. Even the standard of the language adopted in the translation was the sophisticated Kinyarwanda of *Kukarubanda* (royal court common ground square).

Later in 1940s, following the Protestant revival some chiefs were converted in the Rwanda Mission stations. Smith notes that the "mission might have been tempted to lower standards in order to win these intelligent and influential people"³⁴⁰. Clearly, the Church Missionary Society missionaries were happy to compromise on some Christian principles so as to welcome the Batutsi.

³³⁷ Rapport SBMPC, 1929, p.3.

³³⁸ Smith, S., *Road to Revival*, London: Church Missionary Society. 1946, p.42.

³³⁹ Ibid. 43.

³⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 101.

Clearly, the competition in the converting of the Batutsi nobility as shown in these lines hide a conflict of cultural imperialism founded on biology and imperialism. According to Lamin Sanneh these two factors were inscribed in a political project which claimed "natural advantage of racial superiority"³⁴¹. The missionaries have been allies of the architects of such a project; they provided instruments of its effectiveness. It is in the framework of that cultural superiority project that some missionaries in Rwanda claimed that Christianity must repose on the Hamites of Caucasian origin, and at the same time, repudiated any suggestion that the populations classified as inferior may have contributed to cultural and spiritual values.

Clearly, the method of evangelisation adopted the top to bottom, or the conversion of the monarchy and the ruling class deliberately favoured the hierarchical stratification of society. Put differently, the Gospel reinforced and justified the system and practices of inequality and injustices.

Secondly, the Gospel as it was presented to Rwandans and to many other Africans has become two-edged sword. On one side, it may have unveiled the God, the Creator of the universe and of all cultures. Introduced with a cultural and colonial imperialism that ignored many factors of local culture and social harmony³⁴², Christianity has created a dualism between God of western Christianity and God of the Africans.

In refuting the idea of 'indigenous' contributing to the cultural and spiritual values, both the Catholic and Protestant missions provided weapons to cultural and political imperialism. As Lamin Sanneh notices cultural ideals lead to cultural superiority. As we all know, a triumphant culture is by no stretch of imagination synonymous with moral rectitude, nor is the historical failure of vanquished populations, evidence of moral inferiority³⁴³.

That said, as in the case of the Anglican bishop, John Colenso, who received 'an African transformation' among the Zulu, as he "saw that vernacular translations opened the door into creative regions of the culture"³⁴⁴, some missionaries in Rwanda slipped out of their scepticism to embrace the African confidence. Such a process marked people like Mensching. In 1927, Mensching challenged his fellows Europeans to change their attitudes so as to benefit the insights from other 'races'. He expressed this opinion as follows:

vivre avec des gens d'une autre race peut-être d'un profit extraordinaire pour notre vie intérieure. Mais nous nous gâchons cela par la discrimination raciale; c'est du plus mauvais effet sur notre vie intérieure. Ce sentiment faux et ridicule de supériorité nous fait déprécier ce qui vient des autres races, qu'il s'agisse des formes de socialisation, de l'art ou même de la religion³⁴⁵.

³⁴¹ Sanneh, L., *Encountering the West. Christianity and the Global Cultural Process : the African Dimension*, London : Marshall Pickering, 1993, p. 49.

³⁴² Karamaga, A., *Evangile en Afrique, Ruptures et Continuité*, Morges: CABEDETA, 1990, pp.122-148

³⁴³ Sanneh, L., op.cit. p. 51.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.p 89.

³⁴⁵ Honke, G., op.cit. p.146.

Mensching's invitation to his fellow Europeans to be open to sharing experiences with local peoples shows that in the midst of militancy for race and culture superiority, there have been men and women of extreme cordiality and generosity. His attitude reminds one of Father Livinhac mentioned above, or among the early colonial agents, Captain Bethe who, amidst the exacerbation of caricatures and prejudices of explorers and anthropologists described the Banyarwanda without 'ethnic' differentiation as "généralement d'un type humain d'une beauté et d'une force remarquables"³⁴⁶.

What Mensching was defending as idea here is the principle that any encounter between cultures can not remain neutral nor innocent. An encounter which avoid to exhibit heroic exploits of self-assertion always opens the gate to ambivalence, paradoxes, and other unintended factors; as such, it is as Lamin Sanneh put it accurately "mutually harmful and beneficial". And that necessary risk, it has to be admitted, is a crucial factor in human being encounter.

III.6. Reshaping Society

From the installation of colonisation and Christianity, Rwandan society has been given a new shapes and new images. Catholic and Protestant were competing though without equal means, to transform society with the help of education and evangelism.

III.6.1. Missionary Schools: Wombs of Racial Ideology

The primal objective of the missionary schools was to equip the Batutsi elite, the 'born-rulers' with the capacities to fulfil the function of auxiliaries to the missionaries and colonial administration. In the terms of Mgr Classe, they aimed to form an elite "capable of understanding and implementing progress". This idea rested on a number of strategies such as the creation of schools exclusively reserved for the sons of Batutsi chiefs and the conversion of the ruling class. This resulted from the desire, firstly, to form Christians, catechists and seminarians imbued with the high ideal of ethnic differences, capable of leading the masses to the path of conversion to Catholicism so as to win competition against the Protestants and the Muslims. The 1927 colonial report highlighted the idea of having schools exclusively reserved for the sons of Batutsi chiefs as presented to them by the missionaries as follows:

Par les Batutsi Chrétiens, les missionnaires espèrent arriver à former l'élite sociale pro-européenne. Cette élite sociale est nécessaire. Le Christianisme la procure disent-ils. Le Cardinal Lavigerie déclarait qu'aux sociétés de l'Afrique il faut donner une base: 'celle sur laquelle repose notre civilisation chrétienne, c'est-à-dire le Christianisme, sinon la civilisation qui en découle, les nègres ne la comprendront pas'³⁴⁷.

The necessity of having schools exclusively reserved for the sons of the Batutsi was explained in different letters addressed by the missionaries to the Superior General of the Order. In 1910, Father Schumacher addressed a report to the Superior general in which he demonstrated the necessity of "favouring the Mututsi of Rwanda" so as to

³⁴⁶ Servaes, S., "Etudes Ethnographiques du Rwanda". In Honke, op.cit. p. 100 ; 102.

³⁴⁷ Rapport administration coloniale, Ruanda-Urundi, 1927, p. 48.

stop the projects of the Protestants who wanted to establish their links with the royal Court. Similarly, in his letter of 28 April 1911 as well as his long study (69 pages manuscript), Father Classe reflected on what he considered as the "relations with the Batutsi in the Mission of Rwanda". Despite the opposition from some of his colleagues, the study's recommendations were implemented. Mgr Classe stated his ambition on the matter as follows:

l'une des questions les plus graves qui doivent retenir notre attention, en raison des changements qui vont survenir dans le Rwanda, est celle des écoles. Il s'agit de savoir si l'élite dirigeante sera pour nous ou contre nous; si les places importantes dans la société indigène seront aux catholiques ou aux non catholiques; si l'église aura, par l'éducation et la formation de la jeunesse, l'influence prépondérante dans le Rwanda. Jusqu'à présent, les moyens dont nous disposions nous incitaient à négliger un peu une oeuvre à laquelle nous n'y attachons pas encore ne importance suffisante. Le Gouvernement dont vous connaissez le projet d'organiser l'enseignement scolaire par les Sociétés religieuses, veut nous assurer des subsides, mais à la condition expresse qu'ils iront aux écoles et aux instituteurs qui réalisent ces programmes.³⁴⁸

The statement highlights not only the ambition but also the co-operation and the freedom the Church enjoyed in forming an elite who would support 'Christian civilisation'.

In 1905 the White Fathers created a school at the Capital, in Nyanza which had 26 pupils in 1908 all sons of Chiefs³⁴⁹. From July 1907, Father Dufays and Classe started the construction of a school for the 'sons of the Nobles' (diary of Kabgayi) in Kabgayi; to "surely reach the sons of the chiefs Batouts (Tutsi), there has been opened a special school for them", the report reads. The project was then extended to other missionary stations, Nyanza (1912), Kabgayi (1913), Rwaza (1913), Kigali (1914, 1916), Save (1917), Rwamagana (1919)³⁵⁰ as well as in Ruhengeri, Gatsibo, Shangugu. It culminated in the creation in 1929 of the Groupe Scolaire d'Astrida (Butare) by the colonial authorities. The institution was then confided to the Brothers for Charity of Gand (Belgium). The curriculum in this school would emphasise the characteristics of being a chief. The laureates were later appointed chiefs, clerks, agronomists or auxiliaries of the colonial administration.

This obsession of forming an elite from one 'group' was so rooted in the thinking of the missionaries that in 1912, the White Fathers decided to displace the school which functioned at the capital of the monarchy in Nyanza towards Kabgayi (headquarters of the Vacariate) on the ground that, in Nyanza there were many sons of the Bahutu being recruited. The Fathers then justified their decision:

Nous profiterons de ces circonstances pour créer une école pour les Batutsi à Kabgayi même. Là nous aurons réellement les enfants de chefs que nous connaissons; tandis que, à la capitale, c'est plus ou moins un ramassis d'origine douteuse, et en grande partie Bahutu³⁵¹.

The pursuit of race purity was so dubious that even in the very royal family, the intermarriage between Bahutu and Batutsi was evident at the time. Prof. Mbonimana, a former Roman Catholic priest who based his study on missionary archives and diaries put it as follows:

³⁴⁸ Van der Meersch, J. op.cit.p.104.

³⁴⁹ Administration colonial Ruanda-Urundi. *Rapport, 1927*, p. 48.

³⁵⁰ Mbonimana, G., "Ethnies et Eglises Catholique. Le Remodelage de la Société par l'école Missionnaire, 1900-1931". In *Cahier du Centre St Dominique*, 1995, pp.55-67.

³⁵¹ Schumacher, P., *Kivu: Kabgaye, dans Missions des Peres Blancs*, no 3, 1913, p. 95. Quoted by Mbonimana, G., "Ethnies et Eglises Catholique". In *Cahiers, Centre Saint-Dominique*, Kigali: 1995, p.60.

L'auteur de la citation précédente ignorait sans doute que même le fils du roi Musinga, Rudahigwa qui venait de naître en 1911 (ours: qui sera investi roi par la volonté des Missionnaires, en 1931), avait pour grand-mère maternelle une femme du commun du nom de Nyiranteko. Celle-ci était d'origine 'Hutu'³⁵².

It is clear with such a policy that the Catholic Church posed the foundation of the racial ideology which was discriminatory against the Bahutu and Batwa. In contrast, in Burundi, education was much more liberal and open to the sons of the Bahutu³⁵³ in the early twenties. However, although influenced by the developments in Rwanda, this tolerance did not last. Towards 1945, the Bahutu were almost eliminated from schools and political positions. Father L.Deprimoz³⁵⁴, in his report on education for 1927/1928, as confessional inspector in the Rwandan schools, affirmed that he had to deal with *the* "Mututsi element at the exclusion of Muhutu"³⁵⁵.

III.6.2. Political Implications of Discriminations in Schools

One way to keep a dominant position in society which was favoured by the missionaries was to have on their side, the ruling class. Mgr Classe was so adamant in defending such a line that he worked hard to influence the colonial authorities as well as his fellow missionaries so as to preserve the Batutsi's monopoly. Classe urged his subordinates to work hard to show the authority that they were far from being close to the Bahutu. "Nous devons absolument travailler à détruire l'opinion des gouvernants que nous sommes les hommes des Bahutu"³⁵⁶. Mgr Classe's position with regard to the 'ethnic' relations was as earlier indicated, part of the White Fathers global strategy, obsessed by the idea of a top to bottom model.

In the summit of the colonial reforms which knew an apogee with Governor Voisin's Programme, 1926-1931 consisting in grouping and enlarging the chieftaincies (from 200 they were reduced to 40), it was decided to give preferential treatment to the Batutsi. Convergent sources indicate that the radical position of Mgr Classe in favour of the Batutsi's monopoly had the final say over the position of the colonial authorities³⁵⁷. In his letter of 21 September 1927 to Resident Morteau (colonial Governor), Mgr Classe protested against the attempt being made by the authorities to appoint beside the Batutsi, chiefs of Bahutu and Batwa background. In his protest he said:

Si nous voulons nous placer au point de vue pratique et chercher l'intérêt vrai du pays, nous avons dans la jeunesse Mututsi un élément incomparable de progrès ... Qu'on demande aux Bahutu s'ils préfèrent être commandés par les roturiers (sic) ou par les nobles, la réponse n'est pas douteuse; leur préférence va au Batutsi, et pour cause. Chefs-nés, ceux-ci ont le sens du commandement ... C'est le secret de leur installation dans le pays et de leur main mise sur lui.

³⁵² Mbonimana, G., op.cit. p.60.

³⁵³ In 1925 the school of Nyanza (then capital of the Rwandan monarchy) had 349 pupils, all of Tutsi background while in Muramvya (the capital of the Burundian monarchy) the school had 177 out of which, 50 were sons of chiefs, 67 sons of other Tutsi and 53 Hutu. Lemarchand, R., *Rwanda and Burundi*, London: Pall Mall Press, 1970, p.75.

³⁵⁴ Nominated bishop, he succeeded Mgr Classe as head of Catholic Church from 1945.

³⁵⁵ Gahama, J., & Mvuyekure, A, "Jeu ethnique idéologique missionnaire et politique coloniale. Le cas du Burundi". In Chrétien, JP & Prunier, G., *Burundi: les Ethnies ont une Histoire*, Paris: Karthala/ACCT, 1989, p.311.

³⁵⁶ Classe, L., Letter of 17 April 1913 to his Clergy. Quoted by *Lugan*, "sources écrites pouvant servir d'histoire du Rwanda". In *Etudes Rwandaises*. Vol. XII, Oct.1980. UNR, Butare, p. 206.

³⁵⁷ Reynjens, F., 1985, p. 104-105.; Lemarchand, 1970, p.73.

This plea was a crucial step in the reinforcement of the Batutsi nobility domination and the exclusion of the Bahutu. Clearly the education sector has been a ground in which the ideology of racial supremacy has been codified and implemented. Not sure that his message was fully received, Mgr. Classe sent a categorical warning to the Governor in an article published in *l'Essor Colonial et Maritime*:

Le Plus grand tort que le gouvernement (Belge?) pourrait se faire à lui-même et au pays serait de supprimer la caste Mututsi. Une révolution de ce genre conduira le pays tout droit à l'anarchie et au communisme haineusement anti-européen. En règle générale, nous n'aurons pas de chefs meilleurs, plus intelligents, plus actifs, plus capables de comprendre le progrès et même plus acceptés du peuple que les Batutsi³⁵⁸.

Mgr Classe's defence of the Batutsi supremacy led to both the opposition against the law proposed by Governor Mortehan and to the wiping out of all the Bahutu chiefs in formerly autonomous regions including Ndorwa, Mutara, Mulera, Busozo, Bushiru, Bukunzi. The move modified fundamentally the 'inter-ethnic' relations; it created a resentment among those discriminated against whilst confirming those selected of having the natural rights on power. Commenting on this episode, an ad-hoc Belgian Parliament Commission created to inquire into the 1994 Rwandan tragedy and the position of Belgium, wrote: "the Tutsification of the 1930s gave to the Batutsi a political and administrative monopoly combined with the abolition of the triple chieftaincies, the introduction of the identity card in 1933 came to fuel the fire: each Rwandan was now classified on the basis of arbitrary criteria as being Hutu, Tutsi and Twa"³⁵⁹. The period corresponded to another event, the conversion of the ruling class.

III.6. 3. Suspect Conversions

The second strategy in the shaping of society, has been the recruiting of the ruling class for being the inducers even the agents who used force and pressure for the converting of society. The Batutsi, the missionaries believed, were the key factor for mass conversions that would transform Rwanda into the 'Christian Kingdom'.

III.6.3.1. King Musinga: the 'Pagan' Monarch

In 1917, Musinga was constrained to sign a bill of the 'liberty of conscience'³⁶⁰. The move had for consequence to release the ruling classes so as to participate in a culture which opened the way to some material and political privileges. In fact, the signing of the decree broke the barriers that weighed on the traditional authorities and allowed those sufficiently intelligent to know that the only way to preserve their privileges was to join the Church and

³⁵⁸ Classe, L., "Pour moderniser le Rwanda". In *l'essor colonial* no 489, December 1930 quoted by Reyntjens, F., *Pouvoir et Droit*, 1985, p. 105.

³⁵⁹ Mahoux & Verhofstadt, *Rapport du Parlement Belge sur les Evenements Tragiques du Rwanda de 1994*, Bruxelles, 1997, p. 66.

³⁶⁰ Text of the bill of "Free Conscience" signed by King Musinga:

"Moi Musinga, mwami du Rwanda, je décide qu'à dater de ce jour, tout sujet de mon royaume sera libre de pratiquer la religion vers laquelle il se sent incliné. Tout chef ou sous-chef qui défendra à ses subordonnés, à ses sujets et aux enfants de ceux-ci de pratiquer le culte de leur choix ou de suivre les leçons des écoles pour y recevoir l'instruction, sera puni, selon la coutume, comme tout chef qui oublie qu'il me doit respect et obéissance, de 1 à 30 jours de réclusion". In Muvala, F., *Introduction à l'Histoire de l'Évangélisation*, Kigali: Pallotti Presse, 1990, p.16.

to implement scrupulously the missionaries' injunctions. The chiefs were realising that the power was slipping from the hands of the Mwami towards the Resident's and the missionaries. They overwhelmingly accepted the authority of both. This was reinforced by the fact that the King had no longer the authority to nominate nor to dismiss the chiefs and sub-chiefs³⁶¹.

Ironically, Musinga himself and his subjects were not allowed to enjoy a free choice between converting or not converting. Hence despite his signing of the bill of liberty of conscience, the King who never converted, was continuously regarded as threat to evangelism and colonisation and was deposed in 1930. Looking at the insinuations contained in the colonial administration reports, it seems certain that the deposing of Musinga was on the agenda for a long time within the mission and the colonial administration offices. Musinga was accused among other things, his closeness with the Protestants and the Adventists. The King had opened the court to Protestants and Adventists for preaching; he allowed Protestants to establish their first and third stations respectively in Kirinda and Rubengera, two symbolic ritual areas. He also allowed the Adventists to establish their first station in Gitwe, half an hour drive from Nyanza, the capital of the monarchy. This was too much. Dismissed in the later 1930, he was exiled in Moba, Congo, where he died in 1943.

This episode illustrates beautifully, the alliance of the altar and the throne. In fact, to use the words of Prof. Reyntjens, the missionaries, in particular bishop Classe had become the king-makers. Passing over the tradition which required the enthroning of the king to be made by the ritualists abiru, it was Governor Voisin and Mgr Classe who enthroned the new King. This was expressed in the account given by one of his clergymen with regard to the revocation of Musinga. "C'est le gouverneur du Ruanda-Urundi, Charles Voisin, qui déclara au nouveau roi: 'Rudahigwa, par la désignation du roi des Belges, je te proclame roi du Ruanda'. Et ce fut le tour de Mgr Classe d'indiquer le non dynastique: 'votre titre de règne est Mutara, ainsi le veut la règle dynastique'"³⁶².

The nomination of a catechumen King has been a central piece of the missionary game that transformed Rwanda into the second 'Christian Kingdom' after that of 'Priest Jan'. It provoked huge conversions whilst Musinga's departure was celebrated by the clergy. Mgr Classe used a metaphor of a rock removed from where it was blocking the water:

...quoique de toute évidence le départ de Musinga et l'avènement d'un roi catéchumène aient provoqué, surtout à Kabgayi, un afflux de catéchumènes, le mouvement était formidable. Le mot n'y est pas trop fort. Le départ de Musinga agit à peu près comme un gros rocher qui, obstruant un torrent, se trouve soudainement emporté et livre passage aux eaux amoncelées et impatientes. Délivrée de l'obstacle qui s'y opposait à ses désirs, (la population) imagina des ordres venues du roi. Le nouveau roi eut la sagesse de démentir lui-même publiquement ces bruits et de déclarer qu'il voulait seulement pour tout son peuple, nobles et manants, la plus entière liberté de conscience.³⁶³

³⁶¹ Adm. Col. report, 1931, p.56

³⁶² Van Overschelde, A., "Un audacieux pacifique. Monseigneur Léon Paul Classe, apôtre du Ruanda". Namur : Editions Grands Lacs, 1946, p. 156. Quoted in Reyntjens, *Pouvoir et Droit*, 1985, p. 91.

³⁶³ Mgr Classe, L., in *Interview to Father A. Ruterandongozi*. In *Grands Lacs*, no 135 Sept. 1950 cit. par van der Meersch, op.cit. p.108.

In the words of Mgr Classe himself, the masses converted because they believed the King had given an order of the kind. There was a sense of inducement and pressure, at least because the population saw that King Musinga was dismissed without raising riots or protests from the ruling class. This work is not concerned with whether Musinga's revocation was justified or not, but rather with identifying the consequences of his revocation on socio-ethnic relations and the destiny of Christianity in Rwandan society. The process initiated within the Catholic Church would later be known as the Tornado, the mass conversions to which we now turn.

III. 6.3.2. 'Tornado' : Presupposition of the ' Christian Kingdom '

The conversion to Catholicism of the young new King and the ruling class produced a psychological impact on the masses who followed his example. No matter how genuine some conversions might have been, many studies identified a number of pressures exerted on both the chiefs and the population. The first pressure was indirect, more psychological and cultural. In fact, there was a common perception that the King had ordered his subjects to convert to Catholicism. The Banyarwanda called the movement *Irivuze umwami*, what the king has said you must follow³⁶⁴. According to many views, the King never gave such an order, but those concerned, the missionaries and the King let the confusion persist so as to harvest a religious and political benefit.

It was known as 'Tornado' in the missionary literature following an article in "Revue des Grands Lacs", 1936 commenting on it. Most of the literature in Rwanda and outside greeted it as the greatest catholic missionary achievement on the continent, a 'miracle', "the hand of God on earth discovered by Europeans". Others described the movement as "the spirit blew in tornado" from above³⁶⁵.

The second pressure was the inculcation of the spirit of proselytism among the postulants and in particular the chiefs. The missionaries would request those who wanted to be baptised to present a given number of postulants to catechism. Hence the missionaries posed an act which had heavy social and political implications. It must be remembered that baptism was one of the criteria for holding the position as chief. The 1927 colonial administration report shows that those among the chiefs who would not convert, were considered as sorcerers, diviners and superstitious and were deposed³⁶⁶. Hence, for the chiefs, it became really both a duty and a question of political survival to push the population to conversion.

The conversion of the ruling class was a crucial dimension in the apostolate; the Catholic Church needed such a group of potential patriarchs who would be the interlocutors of the Church hierarchy, thus offering a kind of bridge between the two institutions which functioned with same principles of feudal structure. The Church had opposed the social and

³⁶⁴ Nahimana,F., op.cit.

³⁶⁵ Rutayisire, P., "La Conversion Massive des Années 30 au Rwanda". In L'Accueil et le Refus du Christianisme. Historiographie de la Conversion. Actes du Colloque de Stuttgart, Septembre 1985,Lyon : CR & Ed, Université Jean Moulin, Lyon III, 1986, p.96-105.

³⁶⁶ Rapport administration coloniale Ruanda-Urundi, 1927, p. 38.

political reforms, now the mission would forbid to criticise Christian chiefs now 'humanists'³⁶⁷.

If however, most of the chiefs converted, there must be a nuance in the affirmation of I. Linden that "Having done away with Musinga, they (the chiefs) needed a new tradition to legitimate their role as custodians of Rwanda culture and owners of its material wealth" ³⁶⁸. Surely the chiefs wanted the protection of their privileges. But it was a situation they never planned themselves; but one of a political survival and safety. In fact, those among the visionary chiefs who converted or manifested independence in thinking and initiative were rather suspected to develop a nationalist attitude. This is why one administrator wrote about chief Rwubusisi as follows: "Chief like Lwabusisi (Rwubusisi) was entirely won over to our way of thinking, and that he was sincerely devoted to us, I am willing to admit my doubt on this. Lwabusisi works for his country and adopts every innovation he finds if it will be to Rwanda's profit"³⁶⁹.

The zeal in converting the chiefs is best perceived through the use of force or in what can be called the 'Huntzinger case'. Reporting some of the activities of the recruitment of catechumens during which the missionaries would use guns, Mbonimana and Ntezimana wrote. "Certains d'entre eux (missionnaires) se rendaient sur les collines en armes pour recruter des catéchumène. Les Pères-Blancs trouvaient des occasions pour faire eux-mêmes des démonstrations avec les fusils, lors d'activités cynégétiques ou en randonnées prosélytiques"³⁷⁰.

On his side, Father J. Gorju who, in 1917, was sent in a canonical visit to Rwanda reported 36 cases of arrests, imprisonment of the chiefs and the population for more than a year as well as the beating and expropriations made by Father Huntzinger of the Save mission. The later had previously resigned from the leadership of the Nyundo missionary station where he behaved identically. Rumiya recounts a reflection of the priest himself as he faced a dilemma after most of those he recruited by force showed little stability. Confused, Father Huntzinger wrote in the diary of the mission:

les chrétiens juges mauvais étaient passible de bastonnades ou d'emprisonnement. Le père Huntzinger (à Kabgayi) a simplement amplifié les méthodes dont il se servait à Nyundo. Son successeur, le Père Schumacher fit état de nombreuses constructions, des bastonnades, des coups de pieds, des dents cassées, etc. Voici sa conclusion: "Des 3000 catéchumènes au fouet, il reste à peu près 300. Durant ce trimestre, j'ai eu 5 (cinq!) recrues, malgré toutes les peines prises. Nos brigands de catéchistes dans les succursales ont forme des brigands de catéchumènes dont on ne pourra baptiser un seul"³⁷¹.

During the German colonial administration, the methods were criticised. Resident, Dr Kandt lamented the fact that in Save, the predecessor of Huntzinger, Father Brard, reigned by terror, imprisonment and beating:

³⁶⁷ Linden, op.cit. p. 192.

³⁶⁸ Ibid. pp. 101/2.

³⁶⁹ Ibid. p.193.

³⁷⁰ Mbonimana, G., & Ntezimana, E., "Les Pères Blancs et les Missionnaires de Bethel. L'implantation des missions chrétiennes". In Honke,G,op.cit. p.132.

³⁷¹ Rumiya, J., op.cit. p.196.

Le père Brard pouvait ainsi régner sans gêne, décourager en toute occasion les Watutsi contre lesquels il avait conservé de ses activités à Ussuwi (Save) une forte haine, pousser leurs gens à ne plus leur obéir, obliger grâce à ses Waganda (Ugandans, Missionnaires-aides) à suivre la classe, tenir prisonniers les chefs et les Watutsi ou les relâcher contre rançon, les condamner à des peines de coups de bâtons atteignant la limite de l'horreur ou perpétrer des crimes encore plus graves³⁷².

The same phenomenon happened in the Nyundo, Rwaza and Zaza missions. Father Huntzinger went beyond the limits of his competence in investing himself in a political role ; as he put it himself, he " took the command of the country " in assuming the direction of the newly arrived Belgian troops in the taking over from the Germans. At the same time, he took the decision to dismiss and replace the chiefs and subchiefs in his region without consulting with the local and colonial authorities. It was precisely at that time that the canonical visit of Father Gorju took place. The 'case 'Huntzinger' outraged the authorities. He was expelled and left Rwanda on 25 April 1918³⁷³.

So we see a combination of charm with political pressure towards the ruling class complemented by the use of force against the population. Obviously, the geographical and quantitative growth did not correspond with a qualitative result, due to the use of physical constraints which, as we can see was no less than the manifestation of a method in the apostolic mission. As a result of these processes, during the period 1933-1939, 90 % out of 1250 chiefs and sub-chiefs of Rwanda were converted to Catholicism³⁷⁴. The number of Christian baptised increased by 235,118 new members, rising from 58,061 members to 289,179. Then E.Father Hurel, superior of the Save mission commented:

Notre Eglise est en marche, et, si Dieu la garde, en bonne voie. Les chefs et toute la jeunesse Mututsi ont pris franchement la tête du mouvement. Les chefs de provinces sont, en majorité, chrétiens ou catéchumènes... D'ailleurs, sur les 9014 baptêmes solennels de l'année, plus du cinquième, 1984 sont des Batutsi. La caste dirigeante paraît bien être pour nous et à nous, et c'est elle qui entraîne maintenant le peuple qui l'avait précédé, et cela simplement, chrétiennement, puisque ces Batutsi, si fiers de leur rang, ne dédaignent pas être parrains de gens du peuple, pas même de chercher parmi eux, à l'occasion, leur propre parrain.³⁷⁵

Behind this comment of Father Hurel, who referred to what he saw as "un mouvement vraiment extraordinaire de conversions", lies a form of Christianity in many cases imposed by force and arms on the population and eventually, adopted for social and political privileges by the ruling class.

Rwandan Christianity's growth, this thesis believes, was built upon artificial foundations. The circumstances surrounding the mass conversions were rooted in the top to bottom principle of Cardinal Lavigerie consisting in first converting the ruling class who then would bring in the masses. Common people followed the rulers, but in the end, it seems to this writer that they were not converted. They avoided colonial and missionary repression. As consequence, it was a surrealistic phenomenon. The statistics were exaggerated, and the quality was missing whilst the clergy slipped in triumphant attitude and laziness. Hence little effort was spent to bridge Christian faith with the people's practices. This conviction was

³⁷² Kandt,E., Quoted in Mbonamana and Ntezimana, « Les Pères Blancs et les Missionnaires de Bethel ». In Honke, op.cit. p.134.

³⁷³ Rumiya, op.cit. p.195.

³⁷⁴ Gatwa and Karamaga,op.cit.p 76.

³⁷⁵ Report of the White Fathers. 26th year. 1930/31, p. 277, in Muvala, op. cit. p. 26.

shared by many people from various domains. For example, some opponents of 'Tornado' considered it as a campaign created by Mgr Classe, so as to claim the triumph of Catholicism. For many among the clergy, in particular, Father P. Simoor of Zaza it never permitted sufficient preparation for baptism, due to the absence of personnel to respond to the huge needs. It thus opened a way to the return to traditional religious practices. For Simoor, 'Tornado' was no less than the "mediocrity of Rwandan Christianity" tolerated by its head, Mgr Classe. The ligue of Nations in Geneva too warned on the quantity of conversions and baptisms happening in Rwanda ; it asked if there was a 'liberty of conscience'³⁷⁶. Despite those questions, the missionaries accomplished the next step, the consecration of Rwanda and its inhabitants to Christ the King and Virgin Mary by Mwami Mutara Rudahigwa.

III.6.3.3. King Rudahigwa: the Missionary Ally

The climax of 'Tornado' occurred with the consecration of Rwanda and its people to the Virgin Mary and Christ the King. Mwami (king) Mutara accomplished the mission on 27 October 1946 in a memorable ceremony described by Muvala as a "significant move of the Catholic Church" The text of consecration³⁷⁷ was a master piece of priestly writing. First, the King recognised Mary the "queen of earth and heaven", and Jesus as Master of Rwanda, source of authority and power, who gave to Rwanda a genealogy of kings and then in his providence made himself known in sending his apostles to bring light and life. He interceded for the fertility of the women and cattle of the country and committed himself to act in justice and righteousness together with his household, his entourage and the chiefs of the country. And lastly the Mwami of Rwanda joined with "all the Christian nations to proclaim publicly that Christ, the King and His Virgin Mother reign over all men today and for ever" ³⁷⁸.The

³⁷⁶ Ibidem, p. 98.

³⁷⁷ Muvala: op.cit. p.35.

³⁷⁸ **CONSECRATION DU RWANDA AU CHRIST-ROI. (Par le Mwami, le 27-10-1946), Full Text:**

Seigneur Jésus, Roi de tous les hommes et de toutes les nations, moi, Mutara Charles-Léo-Pierre Rudahigwa, je m'incline devant Vous, ainsi que devant votre Mère, la Vierge Marie, Reine de la terre et du Ciel. Je reconnais que Vous êtes le souverain Maître du Rwanda, la racine de laquelle sort tout pouvoir et toute puissance.

Seigneur Jésus, C'est Vous qui avez formé notre Pays. Vous lui avez donné une longue lignée de rois pour le gouverner à Votre place, encore qu'ils ne Vous connaissent pas. Quand le temps fixé par Votre Providence fut arrivé, Vous Vous êtes fait connaître, Vous nous avez envoyé vos apôtres. Ils nous apportèrent la Lumière et la Vie.

Maintenant que nous Vous connaissons, nous reconnaissons publiquement que Vous êtes notre Maître et notre Roi. Seigneur, je Vous donne mon pays, mes compatriotes, ma personne.

Faites que les hommes du Rwanda aiment leur pays. Qu'ils s'appliquent à le faire progresser et y fassent régner cette paix que Vous apportez au Monde. Qu'ils rejettent loin d'eux les erreurs et les vices du paganisme pour suivre fidèlement votre Voie.

Faites que toutes les femmes du Rwanda fassent honneur à leur maternité. Qu'elles soient fidèles à leur époux comme Vous êtes fidèle à l'église, et ne forment avec eux qu'un seul corps. Puissent-elles former le coeur de leurs enfants et y faire éclore le respect et l'amour pour Vous et pour le pays.

Que tous les chefs du Rwanda gouvernent ce pays dans la justice. Que tous leurs jugements soient impartiaux. Qu'ils ne tiennent compte d'aucune préférence de sorte qu'aucun de mes sujets ne soit lésé. Qu'ils abandonnent toute tromperie, tout rancune et toute haine. Qu'entre eux, il n'y ait point de partis, mais que tous soient unis dans la charité.

Aujourd'hui, au nom de mon peuple, je me joins à toutes les nations chrétiennes pour proclamer publiquement: Que le Christ-Roi et sa Sainte Mère règnent sur tous les hommes maintenant et toujours".

In Muvala, F, op.cit. p. 35.

Catholic Church, writes Braeckman, estimated that it had found in Mutara Rudahigwa, 'a new Constantine'. The feast during which Mutara was awarded the Highest decoration, "the Commander of Saint Gregoire", lasted three days³⁷⁹.

III.6.4. The Protestant Revival: the Fire of Timidity

Tornado, the Catholic mass movement of conversions had its counter-part in the Protestant missions, Revival, in the words of Osborn, the "fire in the hills, the Revival that spread from Rwanda". The Revival arose in the 1930s from the stations of Rwandan Mission, namely Gahini, and spread around Rwanda, south and east Africa and was even exported to Europe and some other regions in the world. In the course of the revival process many converts confessed and repented of their "ethnic group's attitudes", thus opening the way to brotherhood in the missionary stations. A strong partnership arose which allowed the spreading of the Revival³⁸⁰.

The new converts had managed with little success to challenge the missionaries to accord their deeds with their teachings. They felt that the missionaries should be the first to respect the values of the Gospel, and not to teach love while practising discrimination against their fellow Christian Africans. They also wanted missionaries to attack the feudal, social and political injustices as well as colonialism. In that, the *abaka* (those who shine, name given to the 'brethren') became dangerous for both the chiefs who abused peasantry, the Catholic accused of being 'superficial' in their teaching and their own missionaries whom they judged with the norms they set up.

For the missionaries who had thought the movement would be restricted to attack the 'pagan' practices of prophetess Nyabingi, this enlargement of spiritual scale to the whole society was unacceptable. Dr Church who was a leading figure of the pietist line in the Revival, put it as follows: "*Abaka* (the new converts) were beginning to subject our lives to a searching light, judging us by the standards we set for them".³⁸¹ This enlargement of spiritual standards to the whole society, according to Linden, was unacceptable to the CMS missionaries. They had only meant evil to be treated in a private, individual, familial context³⁸².

Considered in context, the absence of high stance for social justice from the Protestants has a number of inner causes. First, the SBMPC which inherited the Bethel missions suffered two major handicaps: on the one hand, the lack of material and human resources and, on the other hand, the absence of missionary experience. In 1921 there was no single mission ready to accept a position in Rwanda. Two or three persons from other different countries were being sponsored in missionary positions in Congo (Zaire) with money collected directly from

³⁷⁹ Braeckman, C., *Terreur Africaine. Burundi, Rwanda, Zaïre. Les Racines de la Violence*. Paris: Fayard, 1996, p. 64.

³⁸⁰ Osborn, H., *Fire in the hills. Revival that spread from Rwanda*, East Sussex: 1991. See also Church, J., *Quest for the Highest. A diary of the East African Revival*. Exeter: the Paternoster Press, 1981.

³⁸¹ Ryangombe and Nyabingi are the heroes of the traditional religious Rwandese cult. Ryangombe, mostly in the centre and south-west, Nyabingi in the North of the country.

³⁸² Linden, I., op.cit. p. 205.

parishes among small workers, miners and peasants. Nobody was interested in overseas action. All the ministers in the Protestant Church in Belgium were foreigners: French, Swiss, Dutch.

In fact, Protestant evangelisation in Belgium was recent; it started from the second half of the 19th century. Hence, the first volunteers to depart for Rwanda had completed their primary school- Arthur Lestrade- Josué Honoré³⁸³. The first graduate missionaries to join the mission field work were pastor Edgard Durand, from Switzerland who arrived in 1924 and later, pastor Huart from Belgium in 1932. This explains why as far as 1950s the education system in the Protestant Churches, had not risen above its primary level³⁸⁴.

From the Church Missionary Society side, one can see two dimensions. In fact, Revival emphasised two principles: First, the cross as the basis of Christian faith, the beginning of a new fellowship where there is no White no Black. Second, it emphasised separateness from the world together with the idea of holiness. According to Catherine Robin, fellowship was the essential means for the group boundaries. In it the members shared their spiritual life through personal testimonies; it was a condition for salvation extended to 'sanctification' after personal holiness and release from sin, the very condition to receive the incorporation into a fellowship of the 'saved', the brethren.³⁸⁵

This pietist theology caused open conflict between the 'brethren' and the 'un-saved', clergy and laity. The second line of division was the emphasis on the withdrawal from economic and social issues considered as the worldliness of the 'un-saved'³⁸⁶. This led many missionaries to resist sharing a platform with some of their colleagues they considered as not 'born-again'(not brethren); to refuse co-operation with those they believed were not in continuing "brokenness and daily repentance"; they also would firmly oppose what they called 'modernism and ritualism'³⁸⁷.

For the whole Protestant family in Rwanda, another difficulty was the sectarian attitude among the missionaries. According to Smith, the English missionaries (CMS-Ruanda Mission) were regarded with strong suspicion by their colleagues for "being sacerdotal, self-

³⁸³ Butselaar & Twagirayesu. op.cit. P.86.

³⁸⁴ In comparison, the Catholics schools of the same level as Protestants were extremely impeccable, with new buildings well maintained, update pedagogic material. All that was subsidised by the Belgian government. On the national level, up to 1950s, there was a single public school, the Groupe Scolaire d'Astrida designed to train pupils from the secondary school of level D3, D4 and D5 to upper level. Managed by the brothers of Charity, the Protestants were discriminated against. The selection exam included some criteria that could be considered as 'not-cultural'. Protestants were excluded by the Fathers on the claim that their presence ruined the confessional homogeneity of the school. The changes came following the visit of a Belgian inspector, Martial Faidherbe who disclosed the violation of the liberty of conscience. Negotiations took place that persuaded the government to offer a separate hostel to Protestant pupils in Butare and had their own chaplain (Interview with Ce.4, Belgium, July 1996).

³⁸⁵ Robin, C., *Tukutendereza : A study of social change and Sectarian Withdrawal in the Balokole Revival of Uganda*. Thesis, New York : Columbia University, 1975, p. 189.

³⁸⁶ Ibid. p.32.

sufficient and patronising". This was part of an iceberg of the divisions within the metropolis of the mother-mission introduced in the new mission fields. Yet, the difficulty delayed the organisation of ecumenical meetings of evangelisation which were planned with the intention to perpetuate the spirit of the 1930s Revival³⁸⁸. Bowen pursues this line of thinking when he recently admitted that the missionaries reproduced the division of the metropolis Church, the lower and the High Church in the missionary field³⁸⁹.

Clearly, such a background of internal tensions and suspicions among Protestants did not leave room for credible witness in society. However, it may be too simplistic to draw a direct parallel between this visible weakness of Rwandan Protestantism and the 1994 tragedy. In fact, there have been thoughts on whether the Revival, if it had been an authentic Christian movement, Churches should have stopped the 1994 Rwandan tragedy. Some people have even drawn a comparison with the Churches of Uganda³⁹⁰ where they think, Christians had stood firmly against the dictators like Idi Amin Dada (1971-1979).

Like in the case of the Jewish holocaust³⁹¹ or other similar tragedies, the problem of massacres and genocide wherever they happen are horrendous example of mass slaughter, inhumanity and evil. They call on different factors: religico-mythic interpretation of social reality; local or foreign conspiracy; estrangement of the population from each other. To stop it, there must be a wider awareness and co-operation both locally and internationally which has been missing in Rwandan Christianity.

³⁸⁷ Ward, K., "Obedience Rebels- The Relationship Between the Early Balokole and the Church of Uganda- The Mukono Crisis of 1941". In JRA, Vol XIV (3), 1989, p. 211.

³⁸⁸ Smith, S., op.cit. p.82.

³⁸⁹ Bowen, R., JC. Jones, Lecture 1995.

³⁹⁰ Truly Uganda has had some prominent figures like bishops Kivengere and Archbishop Luwum both products of the Revival. Yet, these were individuals whose commitment was far from being part of the theology of the whole Church. Zac Niringiye underlines the fact that the successor of Luwum together with all the house of the bishops, were congratulating and praising Idi Amin Dada for giving peace and freedom to Christians, only one month after the dictator had murdered Archbishop Luwum. In addition, the hierarchy has been silent when targeted massacres occurred spread by the violent groups, both governmental and the rebels. For Niringiye the hierarchy sympathised with the root causes of violence because both the hierarchy and the clergy were divided between the pro- Obote, Pro-Amin, Pro-Museveni, either from religious or ethnic motives.

Niringiye, Z., The Church in the World: its Historical Ecclesiological Study for the Church of Uganda with Particular Reference to Post-Independence Uganda, 1962-1992. Ph.D. Thesis, Edinburgh, 1998

³⁹¹ Rubenstein, a US theologian shows the religio-mythic interpretation of the holocaust which dominated the western Christianity scholarship from the primitive Church. For Rubenstein, in 1939 the majority of European Christian leaders saw two threats to the integrity of westernised world: Bolshevism and unconverted Jews. "For some, the Holocaust is ipso facto proof that a sinful Israel has been justly punished- for its rejection of Jesus as Lord and Messiah- by a righteous God". At the same time ironically, Bolchvism was being manipulated by the NAZIS to eliminate the Jews. The NAZIS had provided an infamous forgery, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* which made the Bolshevik repugnant against the Jews who were accused of a secret conspiracy for world domination. Rubenstein, R., "Religion and the uniqueness of the Holocaust". In Rosenbaum, S., (ed.), Is the Holocaust Unique?, Colorado/Oxford: Westview Press, 1996, p. 16. See also, from the same author, Approaches to Auschwitz, John Knox Press, 1987; see also Tschuy, T., Ethnic Conflict and Religion. Challenge to the Churches, Geneva: WCC, 1997. A comparative study of the genocides of Armenians 1915, Jewish Holocaust, Sudan, Rwanda, Palestine/Israel, Lebanon and Sri Lanka. A similar propaganda has been developed by the authors of the Rwandan genocide as discussed in chapter five.

Considered from the angle of pietist theology opposing aspects of life like formal theological training, secular cultural activities, involvement in politics and public life, the Revival ethos must be revisited so as to show what Christian life is all about. It seems, from the point of view of this thesis that, a number of aspects drawn from the Bible ethos must be emphasised as core principles of any Christian movement, even Revival:

a theology of Creation underlining the fact that human being is the very image of God; an ethical code founded on the ten Commandments; the theology of the prophets who always took position in favour of the poor and the oppressed; a Christological theology showing how the compassionate Christ became servitor up to the cross; an ecclesiological theology which call Christians to remember that they belong to a same organic body, social and spiritual and ought to remain in solidarity whether in joy or suffering.

III.7. Church and State Relations

Though visited by European explorers in 1892, Rwanda was only evangelised from 1900. From then on the two powers, the Catholic Church and the colonial powers (Germany and later Belgium) had developed a close co-operation in various domains which, from the perspective of this chapter and the precedent as well as the next, present the potential for a double colonisation. Firstly, together, the two powers reinforced the power of King Musinga against many revolts, in the north and east and put the political and economical institutions in the hands of the social group, the Batutsi nobility³⁹². The two powers collaborated in ironically, deposing the same King Musinga and in naming his successor. Equally, they collaborated in the recuperation of the Gisaka district from the British empire³⁹³.

In the distribution of roles the Church assumed the monopoly in the social services, education, health with the full support of the colonial state. Then the two powers pursued a close co-operation in urging the chiefs to convert to Catholicism, one of the criterion in the selection of a chief or sub-chief. Equally, the Church and colonial power co-operated in pushing the chiefs to execute unpopular measures such as the physical punishment, the infamous *ikiboko* (chicot : number of lashes ascribed to persons who were beaten publicly and sometimes being ascribed to undergo the same pain for several days).

The collaboration of the Church with State, both the Court and the colonial administration was is an area through which we perceive the high influence of the clergy of the structures,

³⁹² Mugesera, Antoine., (no relations with Leon Mugesera, referred to in this work as author of the inflammatory speech in Kabaya, November 1992). "Les Relations Eglises-Etat, Avant, Pendant et Apres le génocide", Lecture in Conference The Role of the Churches in Conflict Prevention, Human Rights and Peace Keeping, Kigali, September 1997.

the policy decision-makers. For example, in early 1930's, Father Schumacher chaired a group of chiefs and sub-chiefs who regularly discussed topics of a socio-political relevance with the full support of King Rudahigwa who urged them to "work in union with missionaries"³⁹⁴. Rudahigwa himself "often went to Kabgayi to consult the bishop and acted publicly in the ways pleasing to the White Fathers". A letter of Governor Jungers to bishop Classe shows clearly to what extent the Catholic Church has been assimilated not only as the Court's but also the colonial power's religion: "car permettez-moi de vous le dire sans flagornerie, vous êtes pour moi un exemple de noblesse véritable et d'aimable distinction"³⁹⁵. For all these reasons it is important not to dissociate the Catholic Church from its colonial environment. De Heusch puts it as follows:

To tell the truth, the church was the main beneficiary of a colonisation which lacked an economic advantage, Catholic mission proliferated on the hills together with a small number of Protestants from their monopoly on an education which required conversion to Christianity as its Prince. It was the church that imposed the choice of a young prince, strictly supervising his education to succeed King Musinga, who was deposed in 1931 because he was hostile to colonisation. The Church rapidly became a considerable moral and political force. It triumphed in 1946 when its pupil, enthroned under the name of Mutara, dedicated Rwanda to Christ the king³⁹⁶.

As underlined in this passage, the Church earned a total freedom to evangelise or to install various institutions. The Catholic Church had not only networks of social services, but a huge influence vis-à-vis political power. Father Sibomana, director for ten years of the Weekly Catholic Newspaper Kinyamateka, described the dominance of the Catholic Church in terms of control of political power and resources, both in the pré and post-independence period. 'The Catholic Church', he said, "was the first beneficiary of the evolution. Under the authority of Mgr Classe, it became the first Power in the land; the first employer, the first landowner, the first purveyor in education and health care; as ecclesial institution, it developed in a perfect harmony with the colonial authority. The Church in Rwanda, was beyond any imaginable proportions in comparison with what was happening in other colonies, that because Belgium is a Catholic monarchy"³⁹⁷.

This remark corresponds to the observation of Father Schonecke about the huge network of institutions and services owned by the Church as well as the political influence it had during the post-independence period (section 5.1.2.). Would that huge influence had been used to promote justice and mercy that many inhuman acts of the dictatorial regime should have been disclosed, even opposed. Instead, the Church's closeness with the structures of unjust colonial and monarchical organisations deprived it of the means to be the Koinonia, the community of sharing and communion.

³⁹³ The activism of Mgr Classe in Belgium was "rewarded" by being appointed bishop (1922); he then returned to Rwanda where he had been forced to leave in 1920, in particular, because of poor relations with his colleagues. Rumiya, J., op.cit. p.136.

³⁹⁴ Linden, I&J., op.cit. p. 195.

³⁹⁵ Ibid. p. 189

³⁹⁶ De Heusch, L, 1995, p.4.

³⁹⁷ Sibomana, A., *Gardons Espoir pour le Rwanda. Entretiens avec Laure Guilbert et Hervé Déguine*, Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1997, p.137.

III.8. The Shifting of Alliances and Allegiances

During the 1950s following the awake for independence on the Africa continent, the political developments tended towards polarisation. Many different forces present in the land, the colonial authorities, the missionaries, the newly formed political parties, the United Nations, intervened with different motives and strategies. The discussions in the precedent chapter outlined the role of the UN and political groups. The following sections look at the position of the Churches during that period.

III.8.1. The Catholic Hierarchy

The ethnicising of society under the theories of race supremacy dramatically affected the mentalities of some local elite. The latter would interpret their history through that prism. This tendency toward sectarianism continued in the period surrounding the proclamation of the independence and after. This was expressed in the petition of the Bahutu of March 1957 and the energetic reaction of the entourage of the Mwami published in May 1958. These counterattacked using the myth of *ibimanuka* (those who descended from sky) which had been the core of Kagame's Hamite supremacy theory. As indicated in chapter two, there is a corresponding moral between the Hamite myth and the myth of *ibimanuka*, founded mainly on the justification of the fraud of any dominant group being local or expatriate³⁹⁸.

In response to this polarisation, the Catholic Church broke the silence. Mgr A. Bigirimwami, in an article published in 1958 in *Témoignage Chrétien*, acknowledged the foundation of the Bahutu demands of reforms. He, however regretted that the Batutsi were made scape-goats of the discrimination and exclusion of the Bahutu which were rather the fault of the colonial administration. With examples, including his own case, he challenged whoever would be able to distinguish "who was Hutu, Tutsi or Twa among the mixed populations of Buganza, Gisaka, Gitarama, Nyanza, Kabagari, Butare, Gikongoro, Cyangugu".

On the other side, Mgr Perraudin, Primate of the Church from 1956, published a Pastoral in Lent 1959 in which he affirmed that "there existed different races " in Rwanda and regretted that privileges had been given or refused according to being member of one or another 'race ':

Constatons tout d'abord qu'il y a réellement au Rwanda plusieurs races assez nettement caractérisées bien que des alliances entre elles aient eu lieu et ne permettent pas de dire toujours à quelle race tel individu appartient. Cette diversité de races dans un même pays est un fait normal contre lequel d'ailleurs nous ne pouvons rien ... Dans notre Ruanda, les différences et les inégalités sociales sont pour une grande part, liées aux différences de races, en ce sens que les riches d'une part, et le pouvoir politique et même judiciaire d'autre part, sont en réalité en proportion considérable entre les mains de gens d'une même race... Cette loi demande que les institutions d'un pays soient telles qu'elles assurent réellement à tous ses habitants et à tous les groupes sociaux légitimes, les mêmes droits fondamentaux et les mêmes possibilités d'ascension humaine et de participation aux affaires publiques³⁹⁹.

Perraudin referred to the existence of 'races caractérisées' though the mixtures between the populations prevent distinguishing who belongs to which race. He showed that privileges have been accorded to one 'race'. However, he never regretted the past responsibility of the

³⁹⁸ See chapter two, section II.4.2.

³⁹⁹ Nkundabagenzi, F., Rwanda Politique, 1958-1960, Brussels : CRISP, 1961, pp.54/5.

Church in shaping the differences and in imposing the monopoly of privileges in favour of the Batutsi to the detriment of the Bahutu. It was clearly a discourse of Pilate.

In fact, Perraudin's position has been one of the most controversial episodes of the history of the Church. But it must be remembered that many other members of the clergy including Mgr. Deprimoz, Perraudin's predecessor in Kabgayi, S.Bourguet, Canon Ernote, Fathers Dejemeppe, JMV Rusingizandekwe⁴⁰⁰ were among those who directly or indirectly participated in promoting the ideas of social and political reforms in favour of the Bahutu. With a new leadership which was free from Mgr. Classe's Batutsi complex⁴⁰¹, the Church opened its social and religious movements to the Bahutu elite and facilitated their encounter with external streams of thinking⁴⁰². Commenting on the revolution, Colonel Logiest said that Mgr Perraudin imprinted a militant vision to the Church in favour of the Bahutu cause; he "restored dignity to the Bahutu people as children of God"⁴⁰³.

However, many other questions remained unanswered in that shift of alliance: Having redesigned Rwandan society as inhabited by different "races" and at the same time belonged to the side of the rulers, why did the Church leaders change their alliances without apologising for their previous compromising relations? Why did the Church, after committing itself to working for social justice, kept quiet when its former protégés became victims of the new oppressors, the former oppressed. Finally, why did the Church uncritically sponsored the new republican regime ?

Discussing the factors that led the Catholic Church to change its position in favour of the Bahutu, Linden shows that the alliance of the Church with the Batutsi vanished gradually from 1945 onwards. First with Mgr. Deprimoz from 1945 up to 1955, and then with Mgr Perraudin who, from 1956, urged the Church and the missionaries to be committed to the "obligation of social justice". Linden adds a poignant point : Perraudin himself was not a radical reformer, nor a pro-Hutu who threw in hell the Church pro-Tutsi tendencies. The

⁴⁰⁰ Some accounts have suggested that either Canon Ernote or Father Dejemeppe, or all together were the true authors of the 1957 Petition of the Bahutu leaders. I have raised the question with Professor D'Hertefelt who at the time was observer of the changes taking place as ethnologist and sociologist. He rejects the idea. However, he does not deny a moral inspiration these ecclesial authorities should have played. D'Hertefelt underlined an argument which the present writer shares: Kayibanda and others like Munyangaju had sufficient academic credentials to write a paper of the kind and had proved from early 1950s to be intellectually sharper.

⁴⁰¹ The dynamics generated by the arrival in early 1950s of a new generation of catholic clergy influenced by the liberal syndicate and the socio-Christian movements in Europe was decisive in putting the Church in touch with the reality of the masses. The era coincided with the designation of a local clergy including Mgr. Bigirumwami, the first African bishop in the former Belgian colonies, ordained in 1952

⁴⁰² Kayibanda, future president was leader of several catholic movements: JOC, Légion de Marie, AMR, AAS, Trafipro. As president of JOC he participated in its world Congress in Brussels, in 1950. Editor of Ami (1953/54) a newspaper created by the chancellor of Kabgayi diocese, father Boutry. Editor of Kinyamateka (beginning of 1955). September 1957 to November 1958 he sojourned in Belgium for a practice in 'Vers l'Avenir' Newspaper in Tournai. In the same period, Munyangaju, leader of Aprosoma spent a year of practice in "La cité de Bruxelles". They made friends who supported the independent Rwanda.

Paternostre de la Mairie, B., Toute Ma Vie Pour Vous Mes Frères. Grégoire Kayibanda. Premier Président du Rwanda, Paris : Pierre Tequi, 1994. PP 84-118.

⁴⁰³ Logiest, G., op.cit. p. 219.

divorce, he argues came really later with the political developments when in 1959, Mgr. Perraudin issued the infamous message⁴⁰⁴.

But even there I.Linden rightly comments, "it would be easy to point to Perraudin's consecration as inaugurating a volte-face in the Church handling of the Hutu -Tutsi conflict". But then who is to be blamed for the brokenness of the relationships? I.Linden is inclined to impute responsibility on the Batutsi ruling class: "the moment the ruling class realised, it could no longer make use of the Church's influence to defend its privileges, the conflict was born"⁴⁰⁵.

Linden is right to underline the gradual erosion of the alliance. He is also right to underline the strong reference on the need for social justice in the message of Mgr Perraudin. Yet, the Pimate's communication needed a supplement which did not come: the self-criticism of the Church about its past choices in favour of the ruling class as well as its role in the promoting of race supremacy ideology. It seems, from the perspective of this thesis that in addition to this petition for social justice, the Church hierarchy foresaw the necessity of anticipating the events so as to keep its influence on political arena. In fact, if, after the Second World War, the White Fathers paid more attention to the Bahutu évolués, there was a hierarchy's fear for losing the dominant position in the inevitable forthcoming changes.

To accurately assess the motives of Mgr Perraudin's message, one must use the same parameters of possession and control of power in society. Having described the Banyarwanda in the missionary ethnography outlined before: the 'born-rulers', inclined to 'dominate', and the 'docile vassals', there is a sense that firstly, the Catholic hierarchy's endorsement of the Bahutu cause, was an attempt to find an alternative, much more flexible; and secondly, they wanted to exorcise the conception and misconception they had adopted of Rwandan society⁴⁰⁶. Actually, from then on the Catholic Church became the sponsor of the Republican regimes, in a fractured society.

This argument can be pushed furthermore to explore {explain} the causes behind the change of attitude of Mgr Perraudin, who, as Linden indicates, was not, in the first instance, a "man of the Bahutu" under another angle: to adapt so as to remain in control. In fact, within the Catholic Church, many voices were starting to attack its past ambivalent role. For Father P. Mosmans, for example, in that beginning of political movements, the Church ought to have manifested its total independence from temporal power. For him, these aspirations of the

⁴⁰⁴ In 1954, Mwami Rudahigwa attempted to abolish the Ubuhake institution, but was opposed by Belgians who were "frightened of the effects of widespread dissolution of clientship ties". In the same year, the king clashed with the Church on his idea of having a lay School which has been approved by the Superior Council of the Country. The Church issued a pastoral letter "defending the Church's right and mandate to educate". The ecclesial hierarchy hardened its position, i.e in dismissing and laicising Father T. Ngirumpatse seen as an advocate of the king.

⁴⁰⁵ Linden, op.cit. p. 238.

⁴⁰⁶ Gatwa, T., "Kerk en Samenleving in Rwanda". In *Wereld en Zending* 1988.1. Oecumenisch Tijdschrift voor Missiologie en Missionarie Praktijk, voor Nederland en België, Dokkum: 27e Jaargang 1998, Nummer 1, pp.25-35.

Black people would provoke friction sooner or later against the established authorities. The Church ought to be above these oppositions and possible conflicts⁴⁰⁷.

In fact, Perraudin's message was not an isolated act. To anticipate and contain the impact of the stream of emancipation which was being supported by the UN and the non-aligned movement⁴⁰⁸, the Catholic hierarchy from the Belgian Colonies met in Leopoldville (today Kinshasa) in June 1956 to reflect on the future of the Church-state relations. In the following year, a pastoral was published by the bishops of Ruanda-Urundi. The message was then adapted and published in Rwanda at Lent by Archbishop, Perraudin⁴⁰⁹.

For those who suffered injustices, marginalisation and frustration, the Church move was extraordinarily liberating. Yet a grey area, the absence of confession of guilt and repentance remained an unresolved equation. Obviously, dealing with these concepts requires the courage to humbly face up to the humiliation; it can not be a simple evocation of an incident. Dealing with confession and repentance, is often an uncomfortable process that implies radical change of behaviour and eventually loss of power, prestige and privileges in the necessary process of restitution. The Church was not yet ready to depart from such a dominant position. It even maintained it in the Republican regimes.

III.8.2. The Protestants

The dynamics for political and social change in the 1950s did not waken the Protestants from their political apathy. Except for some few initiatives in the domain of humanitarian assistance, Protestants have remained outside the political debate. Smith, Osborn, J.E. Church, Patricia St John and others report the welcome that was extended to members of the court and the ruling class in the Protestant missions of Gahini, Shyira and Kigeme during the 1959 revolution. They were sheltered, and even convoyed to the borders with Uganda and Burundi whose governments manifested the intention to accept unarmed refugees⁴¹⁰. In general, the humanitarian assistance offered by the Protestant missionaries to the Batutsi refugees and the displaced has been interpreted by the chroniclers of the spiritual revival not as an expression of the theology of the Church but uniquely, as the result of the Revival movement.

Unlike the Catholic hierarchy who attempted a reflection on the 'post-collaborationism', the Protestant remained politically inactive even making remarks in which they showed their incapacity of reading the signs of times. In 1959, the CMS conceived no other future than the Batutsi dominated rule: "they have an innate capacity to rule born of centuries of experience.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid. p.97.

⁴⁰⁸ Reyntjens, 1985, p.229 ; Linden, 1977, p. 222/4

⁴⁰⁹ Logiest, G., op.cit.p.97

⁴¹⁰ St John, P., Breath of Peace. The Story of Rwanda Mission, London: the Norfolk Press, 1971, pp. 200- 212.

Cf. also Church, J., Forgive them. The story of an African Martyr, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1966. This book is a bibliography of Yona Kanamuzeyi. An Anglican Rwandan minister of Tutsi background, product of the 1920/30s Revival, Kanamuzeyi was taken by armed soldiers from his home in the Maranyundo Parish (Bugesera) in early 1964 where he was involved in the aid assistance to the 1959 displaced Batutsi. He was shot dead.

Cf. also Church., Quest for the Highest. A diary of the East African Revival, Exeter: The paternoster Press, 1981.

Will it be selfish, domineering, cruel and corrupt as in the past, or will it be in the highest interests of all, enlightened and pure"⁴¹¹.

However, in this habitual low profile, a voice among the Protestants was raised by the young Rwandan Synod of the Presbyterian Church. The latter sent a message of comfort and sympathy to its believers. The authorities of the SBMPC (the mother mission which had given the autonomy to the young Church some months earlier) were impressed by the maturity and the consistency of the messages of the Synod which comforted the Christians after the November 1959 uprisings. The authors of the 1959 SBMPC report commented:

Une vague d'épreuves et de tentation a déferlé sur les chrétiens, et ses flots ont balayé ou assailli les consciences. Alors que beaucoup étaient menacés de se laisser entraîner par la haine, l'esprit de rapine ou de discorde, les Anciens ont rappelé à tous, avec une fermeté pas toujours appréciée de certains, que le Christ est le seul chef des fidèles, et que ceux-ci ne peuvent avoir qu'une préoccupation essentielle: lui obéir⁴¹².

Such a message fed a powerful feeling among members of the young Church. Some other aspects to consider include its impact due to the fact that as the then Belgian Governor, colonel Logiest, has suggested, "the Catholic Church was the sole Church which really counted", meaning that any other positions had little chance to impress the authorities and to reach the majority of the population. Additionally, the message avoided clear condemnation of past injustices and the system which generated them. The Church tried to avoid confrontation with the authorities and public condemnation. Obviously, most of the shame falls on the missionaries who had the Church in their hands. Even the newly autonomous Presbyterian Church office was still run by Pasteur Phildius from Switzerland⁴¹³. The missionaries had failed to prepare an African leadership capable of taking over in due time. Dr Osborn who was missionary of CMS- Rwanda-Mission in Rwanda at the time put it as follows:

There was not, however, a comparable public condemnation of ethnic discrimination and violence by Rwanda church leaders. Was this a failure of the Church? Part of the explanation may be that the leadership of the church was still in missionary hands. The condemnation and protest which was made, was in the name of the mission and directed towards the Belgian authorities who appeared to allow, if not actually support, the uprising. There were not, therefore, any Protestant Christian African in sufficiently senior positions to be able to speak in the name of the Church to the African authorities. Whatever may have been the reasons for this silence, many consider the Rwanda church to be the weaker because of it⁴¹⁴.

As it turned out, the Protestant missionaries who, at the time hold the destiny of the Churches in their hands were the products of the 1930s Spiritual Revival. Many were laypersons, in general medical or educationist practitioners while, as indicated in Osborn's passage, none among the local Christian leaders was capable to assume a national and international responsibility that was needed. They lacked the motivation and the necessary calibre to link

⁴¹¹ Linden, I., op.cit. p.261.

⁴¹² Rapport SBMPC, 1959.

⁴¹³ The Presbyterian Church Central Office was assumed by pastor Phildius from Holland till 1964 when he handed it to Rev Naasson Hitimana, one of the two first trained ministers who arrived a year ago from the theological seminar of Ndungue in Cameroun.

⁴¹⁴ Osborn, H., op.cit. p. 187.

the political problems to the ethical theology of the Church. As it has been always, they remained absent in the debate of political changes.

III.8.3. Leadership Selection on Ethnic Lines

The absence of an outspoken Christian leadership during the 'transitional period' has remained an outstanding issue in the post-independence period. While during the colonial era, the leaders were Europeans working together with the Batutsi chiefs, towards the autonomy of the churches and the country, there was a shift in favour of the Bahutu. Within the Catholic Church, Mgr Aloys Bigirumwami, the first African bishop in the Belgian colonies (1952), a highly respected personality in both communities, was not named archbishop. Rather it was his youngest colleague whom he had ordained in 1956, Mgr Perraudin, who was named archbishop, Primate of the Church. Though, Mgr Perraudin was a very able leader, it seems that judged from the angle of 'indigenisation', this nomination was a political coup repeating the 1922 Mgr Classe's precedent who was rewarded for his political activism in favour of the colonial policies. Likewise, when new positions became available in the Church with the gradual creation of new dioceses, many very able priests including Father Kagame, who was regarded by the White Fathers as 'closer to Nyanza than to Rome', were not selected, simply because they did not belong to the ethnic group of the new political rulers.

Similarly, with the Anglican Church, when the first diocese covering Rwanda was created, in 1965, though the Church had a few number of priests trained in Mukono seminary (Uganda), it was the least competent of the three candidates, A. Sebununguri, a former missionary-aide who was selected because of his Bahutu background⁴¹⁵. In the other Protestant denominations either, the leadership was selected on ethnic line rather than competence. Hence, the Churches set up a model which implicitly implied revenge and reinforced the fracture of society. There is a sense that missionaries wanted to have 'successful collaboration' between Churches and State in planning to hand the leadership to Church leaders 'ethnically' acceptable in the eyes of the new rulers; but then, as discussed in section IV.5.2., such a strategy produced unpleasant situation, the absence of credible hierarchy to challenge unjust regime.

Conclusion: Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa

Offspring of Kanyarwanda, Children of God

The conception of society by Christian missions considered in this chapter has been essentially marked by the Hamite theory. From the perspective of this thesis, the Hamite theory must be questioned from all its assumptions. Firstly, it has been shown that many scholars have dismissed the differentiation of the population based on physical anthropology.

⁴¹⁵ Gatwa, T., & Karamaga, 1990

Secondly, with regard to the Hamites considered by Seligman as the 'White Caucasian'(Batutsi, Ethiopian, Nilotic), Ki-Zerbo is right to remark that, except for some pre-historical mixtures, otherwise available in different other places like Spain or south Italy- and otherwise overwhelmingly acknowledged by the Bible with regard to intermarriages between Jewish people with Africans, particularly in ancient Egypt - nothing really distinguishes them from the Negro-Africans. Scientific studies, have demonstrated that many somatic features were exaggerated such as the blackness of the skin and the tightness of the waist or brightness⁴¹⁶.

Regarding the introduction of the socio-political institutions, it would be simplistic to attribute the long process of their forming to a 'super-race', the Hamites (Pastoralists) who would have brought them from Asia. De Lacger, and after him Vansina, have shown that the core of these institutions, including the ritual esoteric code of the central Kingdom, was borrowed from the 'Negro-Bantu' socio-political organisations. Ki-Zerbo may be right again when, in an energetical rejection of the theory, says that the "Hamite hypothesis must be classified into the museum of the prejudices fabricated by colonialists"⁴¹⁷. Nevertheless, the implications of the theory would not be exorcised until its victims were rehabilitated to enjoy their rights as images of God.

Concerning the cows, many different archaeological discoveries, in particular the team of La Roche and Doutrepoint, have confirmed the researches of the 1930s and 1950s that the bovine and diverse technologies existed in Rwanda in various places, 700 years before Christ, compared to the Hamites who would have arrived after the 13th century of our era⁴¹⁸. In addition, unlike Maquet's affirmations, at the beginning of the century, many Batutsi were tillers of the land and many Bahutu were cow herders.⁴¹⁹

At this stage, this author is convinced that Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa were all social categories, descendant of the same ancestor Kanyarwanda; that they spread in the interlacustrine region moving away from a central point for different reasons; they would have kept their common language, the cultural, religious and social organisation but eventually adapted their political institutions? They all remained the children of God, created in His image.

This chapter has also aimed at showing that there has been a meta-narrative common to the explorers, colonial and missionary authorities which divinised the Hamites, fixed Rwandans in stereotypes and estranged them from one another. That said, the geo-political

⁴¹⁶Ki-Zerbo, op.cit. p.25.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid. p.307.

⁴¹⁸ The team of archaeologist comprised Marie-Claude van Brunderbeek, Emile Roche, Huges Doutrepoint and van Brunderbeek. The study showed that there existed in Rwanda an elaborated technique of casting iron in 7th century before Christ; that the population practised agro-pastoral activities and had cattle and hoes (p.46). These discoveries, in particular, confirmed the discoveries made by J. Boutakoff in 1936 at Ruhimandyarya; the archaeological discoveries of Hiernaux at Ndora and Cyamakuza (Hiernaux, 1957); the discoveries of van Noten at Kabuye and Gisagara (Van Noten, 1972). See Muzungu, B., 'Ethnies et Clans'. In Cahier du Centre ST Dominique, Août 1995, pp.19-51.

⁴¹⁹ D' Hertefelt, 1971, p.75.

developments which followed the collapse of the colonial empire have resuscitated the Panafrican dream of the Fathers of the independence with possibilities of trans-nationality, and the reinvention of a continent capable of sustaining responsibly its future. But at the same time, the absence of a project of reconciliation and the attempt made by the refugees to return by force have nurtured the old suspicions of Batutsi supremacy, or the 'Hamite empire'. This leaves us with the potential to restart from where we were in 1900. The Hamite myth has become an issue for Christian ethics and mission study. It raises the questions like how to help people collect credible sources of history and interpret them accurately? There has been an emphasis deliberately put on the ethnicising of the clan institution so as to clearly highlight the problem of existence and life-history of the Rwandans. The clans with their history and social significance were people's identity; there was no such thing as the history or meaning of the 'Hamites' or 'ethnic groups' or 'race' or 'caste' in Rwandan common social relations of Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa. However, a question mark remains of knowing if the world-wide Church as well as the Churches of Rwanda feel any form of guilt to confess and repent for their responsibility in the promotion of the Hamite theory?

The ethnicising of society has reached a stage where it means for some that the Other is a foreigner, a dangerous rival to be eliminated. How then to assert towards the political, military and religious forces that the emergence of a human being on the planet was a project essentially historical and divine, created in the image of God and called to participate in His divine plan for Humanity?

How to ensure that during their temporal passage on earth, human beings put social, political and cultural organisations and the ideologies on the service of other human beings, for their life and dignity? God, the Bible says, instituted a fundamental principle of liberty and dignity but also of responsibility and mutual interdependence. In our relations with others we earn something absolutely new and indispensable for our existence for which we owe a debt towards others and towards our Creator? Whether or not the post-independence leading forces, including the Churches, took that seriously, is discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter IV: CHURCHES: A QUIESCENT PRESENCE

1960 TO 1990'S.

Introduction

In the previous chapters, we have discussed the role of the Hamite myth in the shaping of ethnicity in Rwanda during the colonial period. It has been shown that as ideology, it justified the supremacy of the colonisers over the indigenous population and promoted the supremacy of the Batutsi over the Bahutu⁴²⁰. As such, the ideology was a tool for domination in the hands of the three powers, the colonisers, the Church and the monarch together with his entourage, the *akazu k'i bwami*⁴²¹. It has been suggested that following the political and cultural developments in the 1950s, the colonisers and the missionaries abandoned their former protégés, the Batutsi and promoted new masters, the Bahutu.

During the post-independence period, the myth of supremacy was kept alive in the first instance, to hide the monopoly of power, and then, to overshadow nepotism, ethnic and regionalist discriminations and human rights abuse. This continued through the promotion of the 'Rubanda nyamwinshi' (the rule of the majority), a counter-version of the Batutsi-supremacy ideology which, for almost thirty years, kept the Batutsi in a marginalised state, often exhuming the 'undying Batutsi's domination' tendency to justify all forms of discrimination and violence.

Another new phenomenon to look at is the emergence of a "divine monarch", President Habyarimana who would claim to be the patriarch of all Rwandans, the « Father of the Nation » ('Umubyeyi w'i Gihugu') through his ruling party, the MRND. As in a feudal state, his entourage, the so-called, *akazu k'i Bushiru* (the Bushiru's household) as opposed to *akazu k'i bwami* (the monarchical household) became more powerful than any of the legal institutions. Just as in pre-colonial Rwanda, this process of sacralisation and divination together with the propaganda of the regime aimed to shape the image of a unique and invincible ruler. This chapter hopes also to examine first of all, how the new rulers perpetuated the ideology of race supremacy with the implicit support of the Church hierarchies. In fact, the latter had become quiescent in the midst of this turbulent period. Some of them remained silent; others colluded with the regime proclaiming 'peace', 'peace' (Jer.6.11) and congratulating the government while Human rights were abused to a considerable degree. Secondly, we will see how the policy of ethnic and regionalist discrimination was perpetuated in different institutions including the army, education, the ruling party and in administration. Lastly, the chapter will discuss how the Churches and Christians were enrolled in the process of legitimising the regime and the factors which made the Churches unable to confront the appalling record of human rights abuse.

⁴²⁰ Maquet, J., *Power and Society in Africa*, New York: McGraw-Hill : World University Library, 1971

⁴²¹ Louis, R., *Rwanda-Burundi: 1884-1919*, London: Oxford University Press/ Clarence Press, 1963

IV.1. The Shadow of the Hamite Myth

Chapter One discussed the two predominant stands in analysing the rise of ethnicity as a tool of violence on the Africa continent; the 'primordialist' hypothesis, i.e. the existence of ethnic rivalry in pre-colonial state and the 'instrumentalist' hypothesis which claims that ethnic rivalry was a creation of colonial and post-independence rulers. The perspective of this thesis as expressed in Chapters two and three is based on the evidence offered that Rwandan ethnicity emerged out of the passion for ethnicism and tribalism expressed by the ethnologists and ethno - politicians against the aspirations for equality and dignity for all human beings.⁴²² Different actors, ancient and new have continued to manipulate the feelings of the population through the use of new versions of race supremacy myth. This was used as a diversion to hide the monopoly of power and to cover up diverse forms of discrimination against a large fraction of the population. Representatives from both Bahutu and Batutsi groups became alternatively oppressors; yesterday's oppressed became the oppressors of today, perpetuating what L. Ntezimana described as the 'mother-violence' and the 'counter-violence' ⁴²³.

According to Nkunuzwami the Rwandan conflict resulted from three factors: ethnic rivalry, regional nepotism and poverty⁴²⁴. He rightly pointed out the fact that 'ethnic conflict' was an artificial creation of the regimes to hide regionalist, political and economic egoism and greed. The clique that clung on to power used to manipulate these regional rivalries and ethnicity to counteract the consequences of the eventual reactions of the impoverished population. Yet, in restricting the explosion of the conflict to three factors: poverty, ethnicity and regionalism Nkunuzwami's analysis may fall prey to the Bayart's 'politics of the belly' thus failing to draw the link between the national and international determinants of the crisis.

According to Claudine Vidal whose findings were based on a ten years in a field research in the Butare region, the planting and cultivation of social antagonisms which exploded in 'racial hatred' during the civil war from 1959 onwards were less rife and ripe among the

⁴²² Vidal, C., *La Sociologie des Passions. Côte d'Ivoire, Rwanda*, Paris: Karthala, 1991. On Kagame influence, see also d'Hertefeldt, 1971, *Les Clans du Rwanda Ancien, Eléments d'Ethnohistoire et d'Ethnosociologie*, Tervuren: MRAC, 1971, p. 27/28.

⁴²³ Camara, H., *Spiral of Violence*, London, Sheed and Ward, 1975. Ntezimana proposes the reading of the history of violence in the last three decades in Rwanda as follows:

- Up to 1959: Mother violence: the Hutu and petit Tutsi were oppressed
- 1959-1962: Counter-violence of the Hutu who confuse the oppressor with the Tutsi ethnic group despite the fact that the Tutsi were oppressed like him
- 1963-1967: Counter-violence of the Tutsi which never reached its objective but never gave up
- 1962-1990: the oppressed Hutu became the oppressor and transformed his victorious counter-violence into the mother-violence.
- 1.10.1990 to March 1994: counter-violence of the Tutsi and of the Hutu oppressed like him
- 7.4.1994: The mother-violence reached the intolerable: the genocide.
- July 1994: the counter-violence of the Tutsi reached its objective. Ntezimana, L., "Appeler les Rwandais à la Disension". In *Dialogue* n° 182, Bruxelles, Avril 1995, pp 21-35.

⁴²⁴ Nkunuzwami, E., *La Tragédie Rwandaise, Historique et Perspective*, Paris: l'Harmattan: 1996.

Bahutu and Batutsi population in rural areas than among the elites. These constituted what she called the "fourth ethnic group"⁴²⁵.

The perpetuation of such social antagonisms continued during the 1990's crises. B. Ruhumuriza, author of a small pamphlet, published in 1993 and widely distributed by the extremist circles, argues that the ideology generated by the 1959 social revolution was not taken seriously by through the Parmehutu regime. They slipped in the Bakiga-Banyanduga conflict, thus leaving the ground opened to the Batutsi to carefully prepare their revenge⁴²⁶.

There was also more intellectual analyses made by many academics who thoroughly investigated the literature of the exiles and their mentality. They claimed to detect there the remnants of the myth of supremacy⁴²⁷. According to this tendency, the exile's attack against the Habyarimana's regime purported to be about a poor record of human rights or the absence of democracy was viewed rather as their hatred against the Republican institutions and the Bahutu's allies, Mgr Perraudin, Colonel Logiest and J.P. Harroy.⁴²⁸

The thought behind this tendency is best represented in a letter written by 42 Rwandan intellectuals of both Bahutu and Batutsi background from the University of Rwanda to the President of Uganda in 1990, accusing him of supporting the RPF so as to build up a Hamite-Batutsi/Hima empire in the interlacustrine region of Africa. The letter reads:

Faut-il croire à ce qu'on raconte, Excellence Monsieur le Président que depuis votre prise de pouvoir à Kampala, aide par les réfugiés Rwandais, vous nourrissez les ambitions d'établir un empire 'Hamite' (Tutsi/Hima) en Afrique centrale qui engloberait, outre l'Ouganda, le Rwanda, le Burundi, une partie de la Tanzanie et la partie orientale du Zaïre et que pour cela, il fallait d'abord aider les réfugiés Rwandais à installer à Kigali un régime minoritaire d'obédience Tutsi?...En fait, que feriez-vous des autres ethnies typiquement bantoues de la région, tels que les Baganda, les Baciga du Kigezi, les Bahutu du Rwanda et du Burundi, etc.? Pourriez-vous les asservir ou les exterminer?⁴²⁹

The accusation against a so-called Museveni plan for a Hamite- Batutsi empire hiding behind the RPF war has been a constant argument exploited by the regime of Habyarimana so as to reject a peacefully negotiated solution with the rebellion. It served their purposes to picture the Batutsi as irreducible monarchists and to pursue the polarisation of society. It is less probable that all the Batutsi and Bahutu signed the documents of their own free will⁴³⁰. This writer strongly believes many signed to save their lives to avoid being labelled traitor as it so often happened to many who would not co-operate with the propagandists of the regime.

⁴²⁵ For Claudine Vidal, the 'fourth ethnic group', in opposition to the existing three groups, is the category of the educated and évolués who used to project the present in the past, reproducing a mixture of history and myth against their supposed rival members of other ethnic groups so as to secure their positions. This phenomenon is valid during the colonial and post-independence period.

⁴²⁶ B. Ruhumuriza, *Renaissance Rwandaise*, Kigali (publisher not mentioned): 1993.

⁴²⁷ Rumiya, J., "La Guerre d'octobre, une Agression préméditée pour la Reconquête du Pouvoir". In Bangamwabo & al., *Les Relations Interethniques au Rwanda à la Lumière de l'Aggression d'Octobre 1990*, p. 221/222. See also. Gasana, J., "La Guerre, la Paix et la Démocratie au Rwanda". In Guichoua, A., *Les Crises Politiques au Burundi et au Rwanda (1993-94)*, Paris: Karthala/ Université de Lille, 1995, pp. 211-237.

⁴²⁸ Bangamwabo & al., op.cit. pp 236/7.

⁴²⁹ Rwagasana, A. & al., "Lettre Ouverte à Son Excellence Monsieur Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, Président de la République de l'Ouganda et Président en Exercice de l'OUA (Kigali, Novembre 1990)". In Guichoua, A., op.cit. p. 603-604..

⁴³⁰ A significant number of them have since been slaughtered during the genocide which left more than 600 dead on the university campus in Butare.

However, this is not to suggest that the defenders of the Hamite supremacy myth have given up; the nostalgic and lyric writings of Del Peruggia, and in his feet, Omer Marchal a former colonial Administrator reminds how virulent those merchants of race ideologies still are active⁴³¹. What I am saying is that the persistence of these theories, has had impact on the mentality of the apologists of the regime which incriminated all the Batutsi.

IV.2. The Sacralisation of African dictatorships

To understand the reasons behind what this work considers as the Church leaders' links with the regime and their complacency vis-à-vis many of the practices of the military 'divine rule', it is best to emphasise the recent historical and political developments in Africa and in Rwanda. Three important moments dominate the recent history of politics in Sub-Saharan Africa: the period of passion for independence; the eruption of military rule and the re-democratisation era in the 1990s. The first period was dominated by the leaders who truly believed in the mobilisation and capitalisation of human and material resources to politically and intellectually rehabilitate the African continent. During the second period, from the late 1960s, the army erupted and interfered in politics. Habyarimana came to power in the early 1970s and, like his colleagues, most notably, Mobutu of Zaire and Eyadema of Togo, he installed a 'monolithic' regime which formulated the mechanisms of dictatorships including the single ruling party, the networks of violence and the purchase of the conscience of the intellectuals and even the religious leaders. The last era, the 're-democratisation' in the 1990s characterised by the struggle for political pluralism⁴³² generated a spark of hope which was soon extinguished by the forces of the corrupt regimes.

In fact, the absence of reaction from the Churches against the process of violence which constitutes the main body of this chapter connects with the arbitrary nature of the declining colonial rule and the global imbalance in the control of knowledge and influence of opinion. Like in many other regions, the colonial authorities had organised to counter-act the campaign for independence in which some of the leaders were murdered. These included King Rudahigwa of Rwanda who was accused of being under the influence of communism⁴³³, Rwagasore of Burundi and Lumumba of Congo⁴³⁴. Similarly, in May 1973, when the ageing

⁴³¹ Using the same themes and language as Del Perugia, but in a less intellectual caricature, Marchal argued that the Batutsi arrived from Tibet via Mesopotamia; they settled in the David, Moses and Prophet's civilisation, then into the Paranoiac palaces before moving to Ethiopia and dispersing towards the south where they stopped at the sources of River Nile and created the 'southern Hamitic Kingdom'. The author draws parallels with the Bible even consecrating part of the book comprising three chapters to what he considers as 'Old Testament' culture of the monarchs of the Batutsi. Marchal, O., *Afrique africaine*, Paris: Fayard, 1983.

⁴³² The political figures who marked that period included Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Lumumba of Zaire, Boganda, of the Central Africa Republic, Kenyatta of Kenya, Kaunda of Zambia, Nasser of Egypt, Houphout Boigny of Ivory Coast. The intellectuals included L.S. Senghor, Cheik Anta Diop, Cheik Hamidou Kane. The political category had a hard time with the 'neo-colonialists' and most of them paid with their lives in the struggle that Nkrumah called 'consciencism' aiming to rehabilitate Africa politics, economics and cultures in the concert of humanity. Glélé, Ahahanzo., *Religion, Culture et Politique en Afrique Noire*, Paris: Présence Africaine, 1981. See also Kä Mana, *Foi Chrétienne et Reconstruction de l'Afrique. Sens et Enjeux des Théologies Africaines contemporaines*, Nairobi: CETA/HAHO/CLE, 1992.

⁴³³ Linden, I. & J., op.cit. pp. 234/255.

⁴³⁴ Lemarchand, R., *Rwanda and Burundi*, London: Pall Mall Press, 1970, p. 340.

Kayibanda regime introduced constitutional reforms that marked a strong move towards Socialism⁴³⁵, he signalled the end of his rule⁴³⁶. When the army took power, on 5 July 1973, one of its first measures was to 'suspend' the ONACO considered as 'communist'⁴³⁷. Subsequent events show that the Church naively endorsed the policies introduced by the military rule. This raises the question- which goes beyond the scope of this thesis- of knowing how much the ongoing ideological division of the world due to the Cold War affected the mentality of Church leaders and brought them to bless the eruption of military dictatorships in the name of 'fighting communism'.

IV.2.1. Influence of African Dictatorships on Habyarimana

Contrary to customs of traditional society, some post-independence rulers who have overthrown civilian leaders were lacking in suitable charisma and connections. Hence, they invented a process of acquiring a national legitimisation in referring to a prestigious ancestor, a famous dynasty or in creating and developing a panoply of personality cult. They, thus stood as the elected of god, half-god themselves. A.Glélé described the situation in Zaire, Togo and Equatorial Guinea, where the political discourse revolved around the personality of one man, the 'General- President'⁴³⁸.

When such a sacralisation was in its zenith in Zaire (R.D.Congo), in the early 1970s the Catholic Church under the leadership of its primate, Cardinal Joseph Malula, resisted some of Mobutu's decisions. For instance, Malula opposed the nationalising of the Church schools and the replacement of Christian teaching by the so-called 'Mobutism', the policy of Authenticity according to which 'Christian names' would be replaced by names of Zairian background⁴³⁹. During the dispute, the government issued a communiqué criticising:

Burundi Ethnic conflict and Genocide, New York/ London: WW& Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp.52/55.

⁴³⁵ Reyntjens, F., *Pouvoir et Droit au Rwanda.*, p.505.

⁴³⁶ In June 1973 President Kayibanda signed a decree creating the "Office National du Commerce" (ONACO) which was given the powers to control the trade of foreigners and nationals. At the same time, the government introduced new curricula in schools making obligatory the study of Socialism with a particular reference to Chinese and Tanzanian Socialism. "the national economy would be organised and oriented towards the principles of socialism; the participation of the popular masses in the production and equal distribution of national income with a view to ensuring social justice; the planing of the economy in associating the public and the private". Equally, the constitution was changed so as to remove the limits to the mandates and allow the President represent himself in the following elections.

⁴³⁷ Reyntjens, F. op.cit.p. 505.

⁴³⁸ In Zaire, Mobutu took several titles such as 'Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu Waza Banga', Président - Fondateur du MPR; 'Marshall du Zaire'; 'Guide Suprême'; 'Le Guide Eclairé'; 'Le Père de la Nation'; 'Le Sauveur et Prophète de 30 millions de Zairois'. In Togo, Eyadema took the titles of le 'Grand Timonier', le 'Sarakawa', 'l'Eclaireur de Pointe', le 'Héros National', le 'Grand Libérateur' du Togo, le 'Stratège', 'le Guide- Bien -Aimé', 'le Surhomme National', 'le Meilleur de Tous', 'le Père -Tout-Puissant du Togo Nouveau'. Glélé, A, op. cit. p. 14ff. See Toulabor, Comi, "Jeu de mots, jeu de vilains". In Bayart & al., *Le Politique par le Bas en Afrique Noire*, Paris: Karthala, 1992, pp. 109-145. Interestingly, Toulabor suggests that the meaning of Gnassingbe adopted by Eyadema and proclaimed by himself in an interview given to a Zairian Journal, October, 7 1974 is: "prend le commandement et ne te retire qu'après avoir fait régner la paix". Ce qui laisse sous-entendre que son destin de chef d'état exceptionnel et providentiel' et à vie était fixé dès sa naissance". Toulabor, op.cit. p. 122

⁴³⁹ Glélé, A, op. cit. p. 14.

the missionaries who came to teach in the name of "Jewish son" the God not different from one of "our ancestors" but refuse to recognise "our right to teach God in the name of a son of our country, Mobutu, a "great prophet", our liberator and messiah, one who has come to make all things new in Zaire⁴⁴⁰.

The dispute ended in favour of Mobutu. Cardinal Malula was exiled in Rome for several years. Mobutu's ideology of 'Authenticité' provoked an outrage from the Zairian Catholic hierarchy who remained committed to Zairian society but opposed to Mobutu. Habyarimana who was inspired by 'Authenticité', exploited its political, economic and cultural dimensions like *Umuganda*⁴⁴¹ and the 'Animation'. He succeeded in co-opting the Churches into his version of 'Authenticité' in contrast to Mobutu in Zaire who managed to alienate them.

In Rwanda, unlike the situations described by Glélé Habyarimana was a charismatic figure, who carefully cultivated his popularity by creating a vacuum of rival leadership in the army forces and in politics. He was rightly described by Mitterrand as an 'eloquent and intelligent' man. However, Habyarimana was deprived of a background of traditional social settings as well as socio-political legitimacy⁴⁴². He had no lineage links other than immediate members of his father's household. Being born in a small household put him at the mercy of the clan of his wife, Agathe Kanziga, a daughter of these large lineages of the former chiefs in the regions whose autonomy was ended by the Belgian administration between 1924-1935. The clan built up a family-group called *akazu* which was described by a former close ally of Habyarimana, C. Mfizi, as 'Réseau Zéro' (Zero network), 'Ikiguri-Nunga' which presided over the official institutions⁴⁴³.

When he launched his ruling party, the MRND⁴⁴⁴ in 1975, into which all Rwandans were necessarily enrolled, he made the party and its structures the machinery of a 'sacralisation' and 'divination' process. He was referred to as the 'Father of the Nation' or 'Umubyeyi w'igihugu', 'President-Fondateur' (of MRND), the 'man of Peace'. This influence which came from Mobutu went far beyond simple references in political and cultural language. It embraced the formulation of the dictatorial constitutions that would allow him to 'legally' reign unconstrained. It concerned also diplomatic patronage vis-à-vis France as well as in business relations⁴⁴⁵.

⁴⁴⁰ Hastings, A., *History of African Christianity, 1950-1975*, Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1979, pp.192/3.

⁴⁴¹ Communal manual weekly activities, an adaptation of Mobutu's Salongo.

⁴⁴² Reports not verified by the present author but which seems to be plausible attribute to Habyarimana a Ugandan descentance; his Father would have arrived as aide of the missionaries from Uganda at the beginning of the century.

⁴⁴³ His condition of prisoner of his wife's clan was confirmed recently by John Swinnen, ambassador of Belgium in Rwanda during the period of tragedy. Ambassador Swinnen was witnessing on 12 March 1997 before the Belgian Senate Commission which is inquiring into the circumstances of the death of 10 Belgian soldiers, members of the UN troops in Rwanda during the tragedy.

⁴⁴⁴ MRND: Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement.

⁴⁴⁵ Braeckman, C., *Rwanda, Histoire d'un Génocide*, Paris: Fayard, 1994, pp. 97-104. Mobutu conceded 20.000 acres in Walikale and 2000 acres in Masisi/Zaire on which Habyarimana developed farms with engineers and engines paid for the Rwandan treasury. During the October 1990 RPF attack, Mobutu sent troops to Habyarimana who could not remain because of misconduct. About the existence of this land concession see also, Willame, J.-C., Banyarwanda and Banyamurenge, Paris/Bruxelles: L'Harmattan/CEDAF, 1997.

There have been different interpretations of the root cause of the attempt to sacralise the post-independence African rulers. Some argued that divination took place in traditional society where the monarch was the chief of the executive, legislative and judiciary systems, the armies and vital resources⁴⁴⁶. Others say that traditional society was rather participant, consultative with checks and balances. The leader according to the defenders of this view, was a charismatic figure⁴⁴⁷ who represented the lineages' and community's vision of fellowship and solidarity and could not impose his will on people. He constituted the axis of political relations, the symbol of unity, the incarnation of the essential values of his people under the control of colleges of representatives of lineages, social groups and clans⁴⁴⁸.

Such a debate has emerged and continues to divide Rwandans today. On the one hand stand those who consider that the monarch in pre-independence Rwanda was a symbol of unity and social harmony and thus perceive the 1959 Revolution as irrelevant⁴⁴⁹. On the other side are the proponents of a pre-independence inegalitarian society incarnated by the monarch and his household which was maintained and systematised in the colonial policies⁴⁵⁰. J.Gasana analyses the Rwandan regime that ended in the 1994 tragedy and suggests that Habyarimana's system borrowed its practices of sacralisation from both the traditional "Bahutu monarchies in the north", the central monarchical regime dominated by the Banyiginya clan in the centre and the south. From this, it is best to understand the principle of the sacralisation of power in Rwanda as inscribed in what Kodgo has considered as the misunderstanding of the notion of authority which ends in the philosophy of its perpetuation by violence and mystification⁴⁵¹.

IV. 2.2. Sacralisation of Habyarimana

Habyarimana as the 'sacralized military ruler' become the sole reference of authority. All forms of intellectual and cultural creativity had to revolve around the promotion of the Habyarimana myth. He was presented as the incarnation of the unity and well-being of the Banyarwanda. Many apologies were produced by both Rwandan and foreign educated elite to

⁴⁴⁶Radcliffe -Brown,A., 'Preface' to Fortes & Evans-Pritchard, *Systèmes Politiques Africains*, Paris: Presse Universitaire de France, 1964 (English edition, 1944) p.XXI.

⁴⁴⁷Vincent, J., *The African elite*, New York/ London: Columbia University press, 1971.

⁴⁴⁸ Fortes & Evans-Pritchard,E., op.cit. p. 15.

The Senegalese member of the French Academy, L.S. Senghor suggests that power has had its counterweights, its democratic restraints. For him, the royalty was even more essential than the King. The latter was designated by a college of socio- professionals representing the lineages. Thus, if the power of the king was the incarnation of the primary ancestor and consequently of God, the custom and the forms of the delegation of functionaries, officers or priests exerted control on the King. See De Gruchy. Op.cit.

⁴⁴⁹ Muzungu; Mbonimana; Mugesera, 1995

⁴⁵⁰Sendashonga,S & Twagirumungu, F., *Forces Politiques Unies. Manifeste, Programme Politique et Status*, Bruxelles, Mars 1996, pp. 4-7.

Edem Kodgo, former General Secretary of the Organisation of Africa Unity, in his excellent but too optimistic analysis of the place of Africa in the worldly geo-political, economic and ideological strategy describes a long process in which external powers became major factors in the shaping and sacralizing of power. Far from having its origin in a 'dark despotism' of traditional monarchies, it was generated by outsiders, the slavery merchants, the colonialists and the racial segregationists. Some African potentates were provided with arms in return for co-operating in collecting slaves and in the installing of foreign occupation; those who were opposed were eliminated. Kodgo, E., *Et Demain l'Afrique*, Paris: Stock: 1988, p.157.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid., p.

dismiss the discrimination against part of the population. Some would argue that Rwanda was 'dignified', 'modernised' by a Bahutu regime after centuries of dark domination by the Hamite-Batutsi invaders who now, through the war (the October 1990 RPF attack), were attempting to harvest an undue benefit. One of the tools used to sacralise the Habyarimana regime's authority was the anti-democratic constitutions and the forced enrolment of every single Rwandan in the MRND ruling party.

IV.2.3. Enrolment in the MRND

The first Constitution of the military rule was approved by referendum on 20th December 1978. Its preamble affirms that the putsch, which was referred to as the 'moral coup of 5 July 1973, aimed to fulfil and safeguard the acquisitions of the 1959 revolution. According to Reyntjens, the installation of the 1978 Constitution aimed at 'civilising' the military regime to allow the country to return to 'normal institutional life' and at forming a government including civilians while the army would continue to control the mechanisms of power⁴⁵². Inspired by the 1974 Constitution of Zaire that made Mobutu the unique reference point of politics, the 1978 Rwandan Constitution announced the colours of a totalitarian dictatorship in its article seven in imposing the "MRND in Rwanda as sole and unique cadre of reference for political activities" as was the case for the MPR in Zaire⁴⁵³.

Nkunzumwami is right to point out that the compelling character of the enrolment in the MRND is much better rendered in the Kinyarwanda text of the Constitution than in its French version: "Uwitwa Umunyarwanda wese aba ali muri Mouvement Revolutionnaire Iharanira Amajyambere y'u Rwanda" (*whoever is Rwandan is member of the MRND*)⁴⁵⁴. The Constitution acknowledged the President as a unique "institution" in the land. He determines the politics of the government, names all senior positions, civil, judiciary, military, in public and private sectors. This control goes down even to recent university graduates whose recruitment to public or private sectors required his authorisation. He named and revoked the magistrates in his capacity of chairperson of Superior Council of the lawyers⁴⁵⁵.

Another phenomenon was the institutionalisation of hierarchical inequalities. Habyarimana made himself superior to the State-Party and the Constitution and the ruling-party, MRND, superior to the Parliament, Government and other institutions (all emanating from the MRND). He also made the North (his native region) superior to the centre and the south and the soldiers superior to the civilians. Thereafter the regime developed a considerable number of mechanisms designed to enrol the population by force into the MRND and to maintain their 'loyalty' under strict control⁴⁵⁶.

⁴⁵²Reyntjens, F., "La Deuxième République Rwandaise: Evolution, Bilan et Perspectives". In *Africa Focus*, Vo.2, No 3-, 1986, pp 273-298.

⁴⁵³Nkunzumwami, E, op.cit. p, 141; Reyntjens, F, op.cit. p, 281.

⁴⁵⁴Nkunzumwami, Op.cit. p.283.

⁴⁵⁵ibid. p.142.

⁴⁵⁶Ibid. p. 116. Both the 1978 Constitution of the Republic and the 1983 MRND ruling party statutes obliged any Rwandan born or unborn to adhere to the ruling party, in the regime's terminology, 'militant du MRND', meaning a blind obedience to the party. Article 7 of the 1978 constitution read: "le peuple rwandais est politiquement

The population was forced to adopt the "symbols of the ruling party", to purchase and wear the medal with the image of the President; to approve the unique electoral list presented by the MRND Central Committee of which Habyarimana was chairperson. Lastly, not the least, participating in the *umuganda* and the *Animation*⁴⁵⁷ became constitutional duties.

'An ideological tyranny', states Thielicke, "is a state which has a world view". This is an attempt to subsume all cosmic phenomena under a single theme or formula from which every other aspect of life, being history, culture, spirituality derives⁴⁵⁸. All are brought under a same denominator, there is no sphere outside such a state. Citizens who sought freedom were regarded as seditious. People are no longer related to one another individually and communally, but rather relegated to a status of group functionaries. Such a state is not something entrusted to man, but an expression of a man who claims to be the only giver of the meaning to the world⁴⁵⁹.

With regard to the ideologies which marked Rwandan society, this perspective can be related, on the one hand, to the Hamite theory under which every aspect of Rwandan life was perceived as a product brought in from outside by "foreign conquerors". On the other hand, the MRND system was a world view ideology as it subjugated society under a single view of a 'super-man', Habyarimana, the "Father of the Nation".

The ascendancy of Habyarimana and the confirmation of his authority over the rest of the institutions were endorsed and then supported by the intellectuals, mainly the Church who were 'co-opted' in the political, administrative, diplomatic sectors at different levels. While his immediate entourage controlled and manipulated the official services, like the execution of state projects, the licences of import- export, national passports, the management of the public and mixed companies and banks, the President was keen to retain personal control over the system of co-opting and appointing individuals to the above positions. These 'privileges' were accorded to persons either for their belonging to the *akazu* region or for their loyalty to the regime⁴⁶⁰.

IV. 3. Some Discriminatory Practices of the MRND Regime

The Habyarimana's strategy of control of power consisted in organising the process of his divinisation as the incarnation of the unity of the country and in imitating the monarchical control of knowledge (education, information, culture), political (unique reference of political activities), resources (economy, state companies) and the army. The following paragraphs analyse how from July 1973 when the army took power Habyarimana

organisé au sein du Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le développement, formation politique unique hors du cadre de laquelle nulle activité politique ne peut s'exercer".

Article 6 of the 1983 statutes of the MRND ruling party reads: " conformément à l'article 7 de la Constitution de la République Rwandaise, le Mouvement Révolutionnaire Nationale pour le Développement constitue le cadre politique unique en dehors duquel nulle activité politique ne peut s'exercer". Nkunuzumwami, pp. 134 ff.

⁴⁵⁷ Umuganda was, a week day consecrated to manual activities. Animation were weekly cultural activities glorifying of the president, the party, MRND and the regime.

⁴⁵⁸ Thielicke, H., *Theological Ethics, Part II. Politics*, London: Adam & Charles Black, 1969, p.26.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid. p.27.

⁴⁶⁰ Gasana, J., in Guichoua. op.cit. 216.

institutionalised 'ethnic' discrimination in the administration, the ruling party, the army and in schools.

IV .3.1. Perpetuation of Discrimination in Education

Many observers recognise the fact that the degradation of moral values which occurred in the last two decades started in education. Education was under the control of one man, Colonel Nsekarije, kin and colleague of the President in his army career and both from the same village. The colonel assumed many Ministerial positions including that of Foreign Affairs before moving to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. Against any logic, he attached admissions to universities to his department which until then was the responsibility of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. He is believed to have considerably developed corrupt practices in the education system.

The Akazu group, this writer suggests, aimed to get total control of this sensitive sector to accelerate its perpetuation of power. The places were attributed not by merit but by a policy of "ethnic and regional balance" and 'quotas' which attributed the places to regions and to 'ethnic groups' according to their proportional representation within the population. This proved to be a strategy that rather favoured the Bushiru region of the Habyarimana family. F. Reyntjens comment about this practice :

La sélection des pouvant (sic) continuer du primaire au secondaire ou du secondaire à l'Université est donc cruciale; or, si cette sélection doit normalement s'effectuer à base des résultats obtenus par les élèves aux examens de classement, le ministre de l'enseignement primaire et secondaire, le colonel A.Nsekaliye fut accusé à plusieurs reprises de favoriser les enfants originaires de sa préfecture, Gisenyi. En effet, là où la moyenne du passage au secondaire est de 7 à 8 % dans les autres préfectures, elle paraît être de 15 % pour Gisenyi. Exacerbé par la critique à l'encontre de sa politique scolaire, le ministre Nsekaliye annonça même publiquement, lors d'une réunion du conseil préfectoral de Butare dans le sud qu'à l'avenir il n'admettrait plus que des enfants de Gisenyi à l'école secondaire. La dispute qui s'ensuivit coûta au ministre Gatabazi de Butare sa carrière politique⁴⁶¹.

The controversy over the admission to schools grew because the regime controlled the selection of every pupil from primary to secondary and university. On the other hand, in a country where resources are limited, schools remain the only guaranty of the amelioration of socio-economic conditions. Of the pupils finishing their primary schools, only 10% were admitted in secondary school in 1990! The children were placed officially according to the quotas policies, but in reality, the children whose parents had a few link with the barons of the regime would rarely be selected even if they were brilliant.

During this period more suspect practices were introduced including inducement for the teachers for the promotion of incapable' pupils from one level to another. This led Nkunuzwami to write that the school was no longer the transmitter of civic and patriotic values but a vast network of 'brothels' for the children of the population, the poor Bahutu and Batutsi; the "centres of leisure and nursing for the children of the senior authorities"⁴⁶². "Education" he says, "existed as the cradle of political animators" designed to ensure that the ideology of the dictatorship was planted. According to Nkunuzwami, there was a desperate

⁴⁶¹ Reyntjens, F, 1986, pp. 273-298.

⁴⁶² Nkunuzwami, E, op. cit. p 131.

need of visionary rulers and qualified educators to disencumber education from the ethnic divide, regionalism, ethnicism and political influences⁴⁶³.

These practices were never denounced by the Churches but rather adopted widely throughout the institutionalised and corrupt legislation. From 1985, the same Minister introduced a series of legislations for the Reform of Education. Among other things, the Church hierarchies whose institutions co-managed with the state almost 80 % of the primary and secondary schools were allocated 10 % of the places which they would manage at their discretion⁴⁶⁴.

The practice angered many Christians who rightly perceived the practice as a traffic of influence, a form of corruption. In a workshop organised by the Protestant Council (CPR) in 1992⁴⁶⁵ for both the staff and the leaders of the Churches, the present author was requested by the CPR to reflect on its organisation as an external observer. He then suggested that the Churches should reject the corrupt system of admission to secondary schools through nepotism and learn how to manage the places allocated to them with a greater transparency:

Dans notre pays les problèmes de l'éducation sont connus: un personnel d'encadrement insuffisant mais surtout insuffisamment formé, les moyens limités ou très mal utilisés, les infrastructures d'accueil extrêmement réduites, les options et les programmes qui ne répondent vraiment pas aux besoins du pays. Les vingt années que nous venons de passer ont ajouté à ceci plusieurs autres maux: corruption, régionalisme, ethnicisme, recrutement des élèves et des enseignants au rabais, et un centralisme excessif qui annihile toute créativité. Résultat, l'enseignement ruandais se meurt dans une médiocrité qui n'a d'égal que les problèmes de ce pays. A tous points de vue les écoles dirigées par les églises sont tombées dans cette logique de la médiocrité ...suite aux innombrables injustices dont sont l'objet certaines régions et groupes sociaux du pays ...Il est temps que les églises entreprennent une réflexion sur leurs écoles La gestion des places accordées aux églises dans les écoles libres subsidiees dans le cadre de la loi de 1985 ainsi que les possibilités des bourses dans l'enseignement supérieur accordées par les partenaires est un autre cas. Ne peut-on pas apporter la différence par rapport aux pratiques d'injustices en offrant ces places aux meilleurs candidats protestants. En le faisant, on ouvrirait une fenêtre par laquelle la société commencerait à se regarder et à se poser des questions⁴⁶⁶.

The above quote denounces the mediocrity evident in the education system due to corruption, the ethnic and regional discrimination and the centralising system which annihilated creativity. However, because of its partiality, the system provoked a social mobility. On the one hand, many parents started to send their children to study outside the country in Uganda, Zaire, Burundi or Kenya, where obviously, they encountered the ideas of the RPF. On the other hand, from 1980, many parents created many different associations which promoted education in private schools from primary to a higher degree⁴⁶⁷ and started to rival with the state run education system.

IV .3.2. Ethnic and Regional Discrimination in the Army

From 1962 when he graduated from the first contingent of the 'Ecole des Officiers'(EO) in Kigali, Habyarimana was named by President Kayibanda as second in command of the newly

⁴⁶³Ibid. pp. 131; 133;225; 229.

⁴⁶⁴ The collection of these texts of laws were published in one volume by the Secretariat of the Presbyterian Church in Rwanda under the title : Lois et Règlements Scolaires , Kigali, January 1987.

⁴⁶⁵Gihindamuyaga, 9 to 11 September 1992 on the theme "Les Perspectives de Développement du CPR et de ses Membres". The present author was asked to bring an external assessment of the CPR institutions.

⁴⁶⁶ Gatwa,T., Regard Critique sur le C.P.R. In Atelier sur le C.P.R. et ses Perspectives de Développement. Rapport de la Rencontre de Gihindamuyaga. 9 au 11 Septembre 1992, Kigali, 1992, Annexe III.pp. 15-16.

⁴⁶⁷ According to a CPR report, in 1988 there were more that 120 schools created by the associations of the parents. CPR, document for the IV consultation with partners, Kigali, October1990.

formed 'Garde Nationale' to which he succeeded the Belgian Commandant, Lt-Colonel, F. Vanderstraeten in 1963. When, in 1973, he overthrew Kayibanda and became President of the Republic, he continued to hold the position of Minister of Defence till 1992 and only gave up under the pressure of democratic opposition. He held all the chains of command from the top as chief of staff of the army and the gendarmerie as well as of the intelligence service. Recruitment for the positions of commanders of units and for the Military Academy were exclusively reserved for Gisenyi, in particular, his Bushiru native region, and almost excluding totally the Batutsi and Bahutu from the South.

It is best to notice that Habyarimana himself inherited the 'ethnisation' of the army from its Belgian initiators, in particular, Colonel Logiest. The latter in his capacity of 'Military Resident' initiated the 'Garde Nationale' (future Rwandan army) and designed its shape at the twilight of Belgian colonisation in 1960. Logiest put it as follows: "J'estimais nécessaire de mettre rapidement sur pied une force autochtone composée, officiellement, de 14 % de Tutsi et de 86 % de Hutu, mais pratiquement de près de 100% de Hutu"⁴⁶⁸.

Habyarimana pursued the politization and ethnisation in incorporating the soldiers in the 'animation and umuganda', hence, he ensured that the control on them was based on their adherence to the MRND ideology and not to military professionalism. He shaped the army in his mould and referred to it as 'my soldiers'. Nkunuzwami accurately describes this situation:

La répartition des cadres de commandement des régions militaires se fait selon des critères régionaux, d'affinité avec la haute hiérarchie militaire dont il faut rappeler que huit de onze officiers supérieurs qui ont réalisé le coup d'état du 5 Juillet 1973 étaient du Nord, proches du général-Major Habyarimana. L'on constate que toutes les régions du pays envoient leurs enfants à la seule Ecole Supérieure Militaire (ESM) à Kigali, mais que toutes les régions ne sont guère représentées à la sortie... le taux de régionalisation s'accroît au fur et à mesure que les officiers montent en grades. Ces officiers sont d'autant maintenus dans l'armée qu'ils maîtrisent les liens et les pratiques du pouvoir: corruption, fanatisme pour le MRND, particulièrement aux "salons politiques du régime, respect absolu des membres du cercle présidentiel, ségrégation ethnique active au dépens des Batutsi, participation efficace aux renseignements et la délation pour la survie du régime... Les obligations militaires proprement dit sont volontairement ignorées ou laissées à ceux que le système réprouve. Pour les privilèges de la dictature et leurs amis, l'activité militaire disparaît au profit des propagandes politiques pour le parti-Etat"⁴⁶⁹.

The option of politicising the army denounced by Nkunuzwami had two major negative consequences. First, the army was above all a mono-ethnic dominated institution to the detriment of the Batutsi and to some extent to the Bahutu of the Centre and the South. During the 1990's crises many among the officers became engaged in the recruiting, training and supplying of the militia which would later carry out the genocide.

Second, the army was also used to infiltrate the Churches. Soon after his coming to power, Habyarimana opened the army chaplaincies (till then limited to Roman Catholic Church) to the Protestants for one position fully financed by the Army. Hence, the position became another factor of rivalry and quarrels among the Protestant Church leaders who competed to send their own nominee. Connected to this, the first two successive Protestant chaplains

⁴⁶⁸ Logiest, G., *Mission au Rwanda. Un Blanc dans la Bagarre Tutsi-Hutu*, Paris: Hidier Hatier, 1988, p.159.

⁴⁶⁹ Nkunuzwami, E., op.cit. p. 122.

within the army had been named bishops of the Episcopal Church⁴⁷⁰. Some observers made a link between, on one the hand, what may have been the Chaplain's loyalty to the chief of staff, Habyarimana, and on the other, the President's role in the nomination of the bishops.

IV .4. Human Rights Abuse.

Among other examples of apparent embarrassment which the Church leaders had in their relations with the regime was their silence vis-à-vis violations of Human rights. Many abuses occurred among which were the systematic killings, organised violence which followed the refugees attacks in 1960s; the violence in schools in 1973 and massacres of the defenceless populations which followed the RPF attack in October 1990. The second embarrassing episode was the silence which lay behind the murder of the politicians of the first Republic, Kayibanda and his collaborators and then the assassination of political, religious and military personalities between 1974 and 1993.

IV .4.1. Reacting to Inyenzi'attacks

Following the 1959–1962 revolution many Rwandan refugees were installed in the neighbouring countries from where some of them started to attack Rwanda in May 1962 in what would be known as the "Inyenzi" attacks⁴⁷¹. A dreadful attack was organised by Christmas 1963 from Burundi, through Bugesera, stopping at 25 km of Kigali. There were two reactions that affected irremediably 'ethnic' relations in Rwanda provoking the massacres and the exile of many Batutsi. The most affected region was the Gikongoro Prefecture where the local authority, Prefet, A.Nkeramugaba, called for mass murder. This left 5,000 to 8,000 dead, mainly Batutsi⁴⁷². Other regions including Rusumo in Kibungo and Bugesera in Kigali were sporadically affected.

For Reyntjens, the Inyenzi who carried out the attack, the Burundian authorities who did not prevent them from attacking, and the Rwandan authorities who could not prevent the Gikongoro massacres, share the responsibility for the tragedy. Although, both Segal and Reyntjens refer to the UN report that discharged the Rwandan government of any premeditation or acts of genocide⁴⁷³, it is worth noting that some of the local authorities who were responsible for the tragedy safely pursued their political career. Nkeramugaba even headed the next legislative elections in Gikongoro, in 1965. Moreover, the Inyenzi attacks were taken as a pretext to harass, even to eliminate the internal legal opposition parties, despite the fact that these collaborated with the new regime and had unequivocally condemned the attacks. In 1965, the leaders of the opposition, some of whom were members

⁴⁷⁰ The two were Augustin Nshamihigo of Shyira and Norman Kayumba of Kigeme. Nshamihigo, a controversial figure, Anglican Archbishop, was perceived as the right hand of the regime within the Protestant communities.

⁴⁷¹ Inyenzi: name given to the refugee rebels in the 1960's. According to Logiest, the refugee's were called *Inyenzi* (cockroaches), 'cancrelats', "appelés ainsi parce que ces insectes répugnants, bien connus des coloniaux, se glissent la nuit dans les habitations et s' y multiplient avec étonnante facilité. Effectivement, les Tutsi émigrés, surtout ceux qui auraient trouvé refuge en Uganda, ouvrirent les hostilités en imitant les cancrelats et en s'introduisant la nuit dans le pays, à bord d'un ou plusieurs véhicules. Leur tactique consistait à tuer ceux qu'ils rencontraient". Logiest, op.cit. p. 167.

⁴⁷² Reyntjens, Pouvoir et Droit, 1985, p. 465. Segal estimates at 10,000 to 14,000. See Segal, A. op.cit. p.15.

⁴⁷³ Reyntjens, F., Pouvoir et Droit au Rwanda. p.466.

of the Parliament, "were arrested under the orders of a Belgian officer, M. Pilate, summarily tried and executed in the Ruhengeri prison"⁴⁷⁴. Many survivors of the massacres in the Gikongoro region continue to describe them as true acts of genocide which left unhealed wounds and link with the 1994 genocide⁴⁷⁵.

IV. 4.2. Seed of Hatred among Pupils: 1973

In 1973, a new round of violence directed against the Batutsi erupted in the secondary schools, public offices and state companies. The Church schools including Kabgayi, Shyogwe and Byimana as well as the National University and other schools were affected. The targets, mainly the Batutsi were simply ordered to leave the institution to which they were attached either as student or workers⁴⁷⁶. Unexpectedly, subsequent developments of the violence overlooked any ethnic reference when the natives of the south and centre of the country became the next victims. The army used this crisis as a pretext to make a putsch in 1973 against the regime of Kayibanda⁴⁷⁷.

In the Habyarimana regime, the abuse of human rights and particularly the dramatisation of the tragedies and violence were a crucial element in his political strategy. This however, never came to the surface until the 1990s crises. To illustrate this, two examples suffice, the assassination of the politicians of the First Republic mentioned above and the violent repression of the adherents of the Religious movements⁴⁷⁸.

IV .4.3. Murder of Kayibanda and his Collaborators

The most horrific assassinations occurred between 1974 and 1980: the former President, Kayibanda, and his collaborators were arrested after the 1973 putsch; they were imprisoned in Ruhengeri⁴⁷⁹. Except Kayibanda who was summarily tried, others disappeared, atrociously murdered without being judged; their families were left in the dark about their fate. The atrocious conditions under which they have been killed resemble strangely those of the horrific massacres of 1994. Some were buried alive, other put in bags and beaten to death ; others were attached to the hoods of running jeeps on the roads between Ruhengeri and

⁴⁷⁴ Reyntjens, 1985, p. 463. Among other leaders were E. Afrika, D. Burabyo, J. Rutsindintwarane, M. Rwagasana, Chr. Gisimba, M. Ndazaro and M. Mpirikanyi of UNAR and P. Bwanakweri, L. Ndazaro and C. Karinda of RADER.

⁴⁷⁵ Witnesses of MPs Kageruka and Father Mungwarareba, Detmold, December, 1996 and Chimay, December 1997.

⁴⁷⁶ According to Reyntjens, the movement was initiated by the barons to hide the real degradation of the regime which was crossing internal criticism. Instead of resolving the crisis, the regime concentrated powers in the hands of the 'Gitaramists' (the Kayibanda's region). The violence was also imputable to the 1972 genocide of the Bahutu in the neighbour twin Burundi. Reyntjes, 1985, p.501.

⁴⁷⁷ Most of the analyses on this episode tend to assert that the violence in the schools and administrations brought Habyarimana and the army to intervene so as to re-establish the order. This writer is persuaded that Habyarimana and the army were involved in the inoculation of violence so as to have a pretext for their illegal act, the 1973 military putsch.

⁴⁷⁸ The members of these religious movements which did not belong to the mainline churches, historical established (Catholic and Protestant) were arrested, tortured, imprisoned, even killed simply because they refused to waer the medal with the image of President Habyarimana or to pay the personality cult to him. See section IV. 5.2.1.

⁴⁷⁹ Kayibanda was first detained in Rwerere, a centre of research in Agriculture in the north. He was sent to his home in Kavumu near Kabgayi where he died as a result of a plot in which Colonel Sagatwa, brother-in-law and personal Secretary to Habyarimana, took part personally. Paternostre de la Mairieu, 1994.

Gisenyi⁴⁸⁰ - What B. Shyirambere extensively described and called the "beginning of the chapter of the violations of human rights by the Habyarimana dictatorship"- remained unknown to national and international opinion⁴⁸¹.

Then came the 1986 heavy repression against the religious movements' members. These were arrested, tortured and imprisoned as described below, simply because they refused to wear the medal of the President or pay the personality cult to him⁴⁸².

IV .4.4. Violence in 1990s: Prelude to Apocalypse

In the 1990s, apart from the 1994 genocide, the human rights abuse developed in two directions, the massive arrests of the so-called ibyitso among the Bahutu and Batutsi from the South and the Centre following the RPF attack as well as the massacres of the Batutsi and related groups and the campaign of violence around the country with the politically motivated murder of different personalities. This was described in detail in two volumes by the ADL, the first Rwandan Human rights organisation⁴⁸³.

To start with the mass arrests, following the RPF attack on 1 October 1990, in the night of 4 to 5 October, the army organised in the city of Kigali and other places a simulation of a RPF attack with automatic arms and shootings. Taking this for a pretext, a curfew was imposed the next morning. There followed arrests of more than 10,000 persons. Over several days they were herded into the football stadiums and later detained under appalling conditions without food or water. Whilst the RPF attack created a sort of 'solidarity' around Habyarimana, the arbitrary and inhuman conditions under which the arrests were made and the prisoners detained⁴⁸⁴ without any charge finally ended the credibility of the regime.

According to Reyntjens, more than 90% of those detained were Batutsi. The minister of Justice, T. Mujezima justified the regime discrimination against the Batutsi in the arrest as follows: "pour préparer une attaque de telle envergure, il fallait qu'il y ait des gens de

⁴⁸⁰ Actually, the official list published by the government was 59 people assassinated under atrocious conditions. The lists of the victims were published in Imvaho no 590 & 591 of 1.7.1985 and 8.7.1985 and the acts of Tribunal de Première Instance de Ruhengeri, 29 June 1985. See Reyntjens, op. cit. p. 277. Shyirambere Barahinyura, Le Général-Major Habyarimana ,1973-1988: Quinze ans de Tyrannie et de Tartuferie au Rwanda , Frankfurt a.m: Ed.Izuba, 1988, p. 58.

⁴⁸¹ S. Barahinyura, p. 59. See also Nsengiyumba, F., Ingoma y'amaraso, Kigali: CLADHO, 1995, p.3-4. The information came out during the conflict that split the junta. Embarrassed, the Habyarimana regime then proposed a ludicrous sum amounting from two to twenty thousands US dollars almost two millions Rwanda Francs per victim to families

⁴⁸² Reyntjens, F., "La Deuxième République Rwandaise. Evolution, Bilan et Perspectives". In Africa Focus. Vo. 2, No 3-4, 1986, pp. 273-298. See also the presentation of the religious movement repression in the section treating the P. Church messages to the General-President.

⁴⁸³ ADL :Association Rwandaise pour la Défense des Droits de la Personne et des Libertés Publiques. Rapport sur les Droits de l'Homme au Rwanda. Septembre 1991- Septembre 1992 & Octobre 1992- Octobre 1993, Kigali: ADL, 1992 & 1993.

⁴⁸⁴ Six months later the government acknowledged 8047 arrests and 3000 were released under international pressure. Others were released 15 months later by the government of Prime Minister Sylvester Nsanzimana.

confiance. Les Rwandais de la même ethnie offrent mieux cette possibilité⁴⁸⁵. In the same period, hundreds of Batutsi were massacred in various regions⁴⁸⁶.

In the late 1992, the campaign took a new turn. A large scale violence was inaugurated by an inflammatory speech by Léon Mugesera, the vice-Chairman of the MRND in Gisenyi. At a rally in Kabaya, on 22 November 1992, L. Mugesera blamed the Batutsi and the opposition for the betrayal of the country in negotiating with the rebellion of the RPF⁴⁸⁷. He then mobilised for the mass murder as follows:

qui veut la paix prépare la guerre. Ecoutez bien c'est la 4 ou 5 fois que je dis ceci dans notre préfecture de Gisenyi...je disais dernièrement à un militant du PL (a political party which was associated to Tutsi and the RPF) que la faute que nous avons faite en 1959, c'est que j'étais enfant, c'est que nous les avons laissé sortir sains et saufs. Je lui ai dit, Je t'apprends que votre (Tutsi) pays, c'est l'Ethiopie, et nous allons vous expédier sous peu chez vous via Nyabarongo (ours: Nyabarongo river is the source of Nile river) en voyage express. Voilà je vous répète donc que nous devons vite nous mettre à l'ouvrage (...). Pour terminer, je vous rappelle l'essentiel de ce que j'ai dit: la vigilance au premier chef. Sachez que celui à qui vous n'avez pas tranché la tête, c'est lui qui vous tranchera la vôtre⁴⁸⁸.

Kabaya where L.Mugesera's mobilisation took place was the native village of Habyarimana, in the Bushiru region⁴⁸⁹. The most significant characteristics of L.Mugesera's appeal were firstly, its reference to the theories which make of the Batutsi, foreigners from Ethiopia not Rwandans: "Je lui ai dit, je t'apprends que votre pays, c'est l'Ethiopie"(I tell you, your country is Ethiopia).

Secondly, Mugesera's speech also suggested that the genocide had been planned: "et nous allons vous expédier sous peu chez vous via la Nyabarongo"(we are going to send you very soon by the most direct route, the Nyabarongo River)⁴⁹⁰. In fact, Mugesera's speech bears a strange resemblance to that previously delivered by President Habyarimana in Ruhengeri on the 15 of November 1992⁴⁹¹. During a meeting of his party, the MRND, Habyarimana referred to the Arusha Protocols so far signed, as a 'scrap of paper'- a reference which recalls Hitler when the Führer characterised the 'Munich Agreement' as a 'scrap of paper'.

The response from the MRND- CDR extremist parties was immediate. They organised massacres in December 1992 and January 1993 in which more than 1000 people were killed

⁴⁸⁵Reyntjens, 1994, p. 94.

⁴⁸⁶The massacres happened repeatedly, in particular in Gisenyi and Ruhengeri (Kibirira; October 1990; January-February 1991); Mutara (January- February 1991); Bugesera in March 1992 and again March-April 1993, and so forth. ADL, op.cit. 1991-1992 & 1992-1993.

⁴⁸⁷ In fact, the Rwandan delegation in the Arusha negotiations were led by the Foreign Affairs Minister, B. Ngurinzira, from the Opposition and at various occasions the opposition had met the RPF authorities to resolve the crises that emerged in the negotiations.

⁴⁸⁸ Guichoua, A. op. cit. pp. 620/21. Message recorded on video.

⁴⁸⁹The region was known for its resistance against the authority of the central kingdom before its last chief, Nyamakwa was dismissed in 1926 by the Belgians and replaced by chief Nyangezi who then installed his headquarter in Shyira. Nahimana, F., op.cit. p.130.

⁴⁹⁰ The Nyabarongo river is the source of the Nile which drains outside Rwanda, east of Tanzania, Ouganda, Ethiopia and Sudan, then Egypt.

⁴⁹¹ Habyarimana's speech raised a controversy and strong attacks from the opposition. Though he later adopted a low profile under international diplomatic pressure and the opposition accepted to sign the Peace Agreement, his party, the MRND continued to say that they would not apply the Agreement if it was not renegotiated. With regard to Mugesera, an arrest warrant was issued by the Kigali Prosecutor. But then L. Mugesera went missing, according to credible sources, under the protection of the Presidency. He later exiled in Canada.

in Ruhengeri and Gisenyi. This provided a pretext to the RPF which attacked the cities of Ruhengeri and Ngarama on 8 February 1993 and stopped 25 miles from Kigali⁴⁹².

Political observers characterised it as a "true project of destabilisation" planned so as to prevent and hinder the democratic process. The monitoring undertaken in details by the ADL and documented by international commissions and observers showed that the campaign was carried out by a network of mechanisms including many violent groups within the army, the MRND and allies set up by the regime to counter the dynamics of the newly created opposition parties and civil society⁴⁹³. They were co-ordinated by the *Akazu*- group.

The members of these networks always got away with the crimes because they controlled and had paralysed the judiciary system. The organisers and the executioners, the army, the gendarmerie, the MRND's militia, the 'Interahamwe', the local administration were dominated by the MRND bureaucrats (Prefets, Burgomasters, councillors) and were linked together with some media networks, like the RTLM radio and the Kangura newspaper. In fact, the President together with his entourage was the centre point of the groups of violence as indicated by various international reports; he held the supreme authority over all other influential powers such as Executive, Legislative, Judiciary as discussed above in section 4.4.2.

However, the concept of destabilisation of the regime was also utilised in the MRND camp which accused the opposition of planning an insurrection or a putsch against Habyarimana. For Gasana, all the activities of the opposition were deemed a project of insurrection organised by the alliance of the RPF and the Opposition. The campaign failed, according to him, because the MRND was the "sole political party prepared to challenge its opponents through democratic elections"⁴⁹⁴.

Gasana, a member of the moderate wing within the MRND is certainly right to evoke the naive alliance of the opposition with the RPF, but he may be one of these MRND civilians who were driven to present a diversion to the public opinion so that the MRND system pursue an agenda designed to cling on power. Actually, he later had to exile in August 1993 and leave his position as Minister of Defence following the threats of AMASASU, one of the violent groups created by the army hierarchy to oppose the Arusha Peace talks.

This campaign was a prelude to the apocalypse. "It was a call for a genocide" wrote the then Prime Minister of Rwanda, Dr Nsengiyaremye⁴⁹⁵. Despite all the evidence available, what the observers, diplomats, journalists, opposition parties and the population deplored as an invitation to mass murder through a racial mobilisation never urged the church hierarchies to take any initiative. The Churches which participated in the initiation of the Arusha negotiations appeared, really fearfully, managing to avoid condemning the clear sabotage of

⁴⁹² Nsengiyaremye, D., op.cit. p. 256.

⁴⁹³ Reyntjens, F., 1994, 189; Reyntjens, F 'Akazu', 'Escadrons de la mort' et autres 'Réseau zéro': un historique des résistances au changement politique depuis 1990". In Guichoua, A., op.cit. pp. 265-273, in particular, p. 270.

⁴⁹⁴ Gasana, J., "Guerre, Paix et Démocratie au Rwanda. In Guichoua, A., op.cit. pp.223-227, particularly. p.223.

⁴⁹⁵ Nsengiyaremye, D., in Guichoua, 1996, p.256.

the Peace Agreement by the MRND-CDR related to President Habyarimana. Between questioning or legitimating this corrupt system, the Church, in general the hierarchy, chose the latter.

IV.5. The Churches: Supportive Organs of the MRND Regime

During the Habyarimana reign; the adhesion to the MRND was the only option given to the population. The Churches were left as the only organised forces capable of denouncing or opposing any abuse⁴⁹⁶. The Church hierarchies were unable to play such a prominent role because, they had entered into intimate relationship with the regime and they had not made a theological assessment of the socio-political situation to prepare any effective responses.

The Church's legitimisation of the regime had two axes. First, the hierarchy accepted to participate individually in the organs of the ruling- party from the Congress to the central Committee and to various other levels such as the committees and councils of prefectures and communes in which the local clergy were members. Second, to understand the deep character of the Church hierarchy enrolment in the MRND structures, it is wise to underline the fact that it went beyond the very public acknowledgement of the membership of the Catholic archbishop of Kigali, Vincent Nsengiyumva in the MRND organs.

In fact, all the Church institutions and offices were integrated into the structures of the ruling party. Any Church institutions⁴⁹⁷ were considered as a Cellule, i.e. cell or the base organ of the party. These institutions had for those in authority the members of the clergy, Bishops, Priests, Pastors, Nuns, Brothers who automatically became their official representatives in the MRND organs.

The Churches as supportive organ of the MRND must be understood in what we described under sections IV.2.3. " the enrolment in the MRND" and in the following sections. In summary, Habyarimana put himself above any other institution, above the Constitution of the Republic and even above his ruling party, the MRND.

In fact, by the force of law, each single Rwandan was obligatory member of the MRND. Both the statutes of the MRND and the Constitution of the Republic compelled all the Banyarwanda - from all ages, gender, ethnic group and religions without exception - to belong to the MRND. They grouped in the cells, the basic organ of the MRND ruled over by a committee of five elected through a list elaborated by the Burgomaster, an appointee of the President of the MRND- Republic. This was achieved in the base organs.

The MRND cell, the most elementary organ was made of 50 to 100 families in the villages. In cities and agglomerations, the workers of the public and private sectors belonged to a the so-called specialised cells ("Cellules spécialisées du MRND) which

⁴⁹⁶ There couldn't be a political, social, cultural, economical or judiciary activities outside the MRND state-party. To adventure in Trade Unions, youth, women or liberal professions' associations outside the ruling party was anti-constitutional.

⁴⁹⁷ These would include school, hospital, Church or bishop's offices, nuns' Covents, Church charity organisations and so forth.

corresponded to the institution they worked in. Such a cell of the MRND was ruled over by the Senior Executive Officer who, being in public or private sector, was obligatory appointed by the President of the MRND-Republic. The following key articles of the Statutes of the MRND (1983) and of the 1978 Constitution of the Republic show clearly how the MRND world-view subsumed all the sectors of society including the Churches and the clergy⁴⁹⁸.

Art.7 (Constitution of Republic of 20 December 1978):

Le peuple Rwandais est politiquement organisé au sein du Mouvement Revolutionnaire National Pour le Developpement, formation politique unique hors du cadre de laquelle nulle activite politique ne peut s'exercer. Tout Rwandais est de plein droit membre du Mouvement Revolutionnaire pour le Developpement.

This alinea is much stronger in its Kinyarwanda version: *Uwitwa Umunyarwanda wese aba ari muri Mouvement Revolutionnaire Ihaanira Amajyambere y'U Rwanda*: whoever is Rwandan is obligatory member of the MRND.

Art. 12 (Statuts du MRND): Les organes Centraux du MRND sont:

- a. Présidence du Mouvement (MRND)
- b. Congres National
- c. Comité Central

The presidency of the MRND, the presidency of the National Congress, that of the Central Committee was a personal business of Habyarimana alone with a total ignorance of what some would consider as a directorium to assist in any sense. In addition the majority of the members of the Congress; all the members of the Central Committee were appointed by Habyarimana as were the members of his Gouvernement and the Parliament whose unique list was established by the Central Committee under his chairship. To make things much easier to rule over the institutions, the President of the Republic appointed the Supreme Judiciary Institution, the Constitutional Court; he chaired its Superior Council of the Magistrature.

Art. 22 (MRND Statutes): Le Comité Central.

" Le Comité Central est composé du Président du Mouvement et d'autres membres nommés par lui".

Art.23 (statuts du MRND):

" Sous la conduite du Président du Mouvement, assisté du Secrétaire Général, le Comité Central:

- Conçoit et dirige la politique du Mouvement
- Contrôle tous les organes du Mouvement à l'exception de la Présidence du Mouvement et du Congres National;
- Arrête les statuts des cadres et des organisations intégrées au mouvement;
- Le Comité Central peut modifier, suspendre ou annuler toutes les décisions prises par les organes qui lui sont inférieurs.

Art.25(statuts du MRND):

Le Comité Central comprend cinq Commissions:

- Commission Politique
- Commission Economique
- Commission Scientifique
- Commission Sociale

⁴⁹⁸ Sources: a. Constitution de la République Rwandaise de 1978;b. Les Statuts du Parti-Etat, le MRND de 1983. In Nkunzumwami, E., *La Tragédie Rwandaise. Historique et Perspectives*, Paris: l'Harmattan, 1996. Annexes IX, p. 279 à 320.

As indicated in these functions the Central Committee has a character which subsumes the inferior organs including the Government, the Parliament and the Judiciary. As a state party, the MRND's chart comprises the Part organs, the Executive (Government and Administration and Army and security forces), the Legislative and the Judiciary, appointed by the president.

As stated above, the Public sphere as in the private institutions, companies, each school, medical institution, each Ministry, each central office or any religious, charity, governmental or non-governmental organisation was a cell of the MRND. These so-called "cellules spécialisées du MRND" were automatically under the authority of a committee of five chaired by the Senior Executive Officer who was directly accountable to the president of the MRND in the Prefecture, the Prefet. This was expressed in the statutes as follows:

Art.61 (statuts du MRND):

Chaque colline, chaque quartier de ville comptant de 50 a 100 familles, chaque service public, chaque établissement d'enseignement ou entreprise privée comportant au moins 30 militants - name of the adherents to the MRND- constitue une cellule du Mouvement. Toutefois, l'employeur, le travailleur, ou l'agent de l'état [ou du secteur prive] résidant dans le quartier urbain et inscrit d'office dans la cellule du centre d'activité de établissement dans lequel il travaille, est de surcroît membre de la cellule de sa résidence.

Par dérogation a l'article 41 des présents statuts (Art.41 says: le Responsable du MRND dans la commune est le Bourgoumestre], les cellules des services publics, des établissements d'enseignement ou des entreprises privées rendent compte au responsable du MRND dans la préfecture. Les cellules de la Présidence de la République, de la Présidence du MRND et celles des ministères, de forces armées sont placées sous l'autorité directe du président du MRND.

Art. 63 (statuts du MRND):

Cellule est dirigée par un comité de cinq membres élus pour un mandant de cinq ans renouvelables... sur une liste des candidats dressée par le responsable du MRND dans le secteur et approuvée par le comité communal. *Tout militant qui dirige un service public, un établissement d'enseignement ou une entreprise privée est d'office responsable du comité de la cellule de son ressort [Italic ours].*

Clearly, what happened during the MRND regime was a vicious circle which started from Habyarimana and ended on him.

The shape of this MRND ideology had some similarity to the Roman imperial cult. The Roman system in 4 BC rested on the deification of the Caesar, and the confusion of the private household of 'Augustus' and the public domain⁴⁹⁹. The symbols in the process of deification under Caesar included the introduction of coins which bore the image of Caesar

⁴⁹⁹Kee,A., "Imperial cult: unmasking of an ideology". Scottish Journal of Religious Studies, vol. VI, No 2, Autumn 1985. pp. 112- 127. Ideology, according to Kee is understood as a "system of ideas and values which if sufficiently extensive can constitute a world view and be present in society in the guise of something else, e.g. in the form of religion. In presenting a picture of reality, the ideology offers an explanation of why things are as they are". The Roman imperial cult which developed from the fourth century BCE starts with Alexander the Great and his successors, Caesar and Augustus. They elaborated on the Hellenistic divine ruler. This process had three functions: to unify social and national groups; to transfer to political figures an attitude of devotion and commitment and to carry out a political test of loyalty. When Constantine converted to Christianity he rehabilitated Christians devastated by persecutions when they were made scapegoats of different disasters that affected the empire. He incorporated the enemy by guaranteeing a state status to Christian religion and used Christianity as a tool of re-legitimation of the imperial ideology

instead of the image of gods. In a long-run power struggle, Caesar succeeded to usurp a decree from the Senate that made him god while several national events were changed to fit in his agenda, for example the date of the July games.

Likewise the 'divinisation' and the 'imperial cult' of Habyarimana was reflected in the above mentioned obligation to adopt the symbols of the regime, including wearing the medal bearing his image, the so-called "medal of the party"(MRND); the uniforms and dresses with the symbols of his party. Several other events like rallies, marches for the party, long queues of the population including public and private sectors' workers to salute the 'President-Fondateur' or prominent external visits, were regularly organised.

IV. 5.1. Roman Catholic Hierarchy: a Supportive Organ

Like his predecessor, President Habyarimana was a fervent Catholic member who made himself known to the Pope; in addition to visiting Rome and to participating regularly at mass, he persistently maintained the Papal Nuncio, as Dean of all the Diplomatic Missions in Kigali. In 1976 V.Nsengiyumva then bishop of the Nyundo diocese in Gisenyi (stronghold of the President) was appointed Archbishop of Kigali and Primate of the Church. According to credible sources this nomination was influenced by the President⁵⁰⁰. In the same period, the Archbishop was named a member of the Central Committee of the MRND up to 1990. The primate was also named by the President as Chairman of the very influential *Commission of Social Affairs* of the MRND that covered many governmental sectors including Education, Health, Demography and Family Planning Programmes, Social development, Employment, Sports, Religions Affairs, Church-State Relations, etc. As a member of the Central Committee of the MRND, the State-Party, he ranked second after the President, ahead of the Cabinet members. He received official material privileges, a permanent official car and driver⁵⁰¹.

One domain in which the Catholic Church was not supportive of the MRND policies was the Family Planning programmes. In his capacity as Head of the MRND Commission of 'Social Affairs', tutor of the Government Department of demography and Family Planning Office, ONAPO, Archbishop V.Nsengiyumva, together with his colleagues, blocked the deployment of the programmes, particularly in the network of social services of the Church. In an attempt to counteract this difficulty, the Government together with the Protestants, launched a parallel organisation called, ARBEF. The organisation was created by individual members and organisations, including various Cabinet departments under the umbrella of the ONAPO. ARBEF was chaired from its creation in 1986 by the most influential Protestant Church leader, Revd. M. Twagirayesu, the President of the Presbyterian Church in Rwanda.

⁵⁰⁰ Mgr. V. Nsengiyumva replaced Mgr Perraudin as Primate of the Church. Perraudin's era was over following the fall of his protégé, Kayibanda.

⁵⁰¹ This historical closeness from the Belgian colonial period when the Head of the Church, Mgr Classe was the sponsor of both the Monarch and of the colonial administration was acknowledged in the 1994 Christmas message by the Catholic bishops who justified it having had for their sole motivation the interest of the population. Catholic bishops, Message of Christmas 1994, p. 6.

IV. 5.1.1. Ethnic Practices in Church Institutions

Far from seeking the interest of the population, or being a moral guide, the Catholic hierarchy has contributed to bringing a servile cult to the MRND regime and to reproducing the regime's ethnic discriminatory policies. The Archbishop had not only been one of the central pieces of the decision-making organs but also a consistent promoter of the MRND ideology and featured in public gatherings and in the Church. It must be remembered that the Habyarimana regime arrived after a short period of dispute between the Church and the Kayibanda government recounted above⁵⁰². Instead of bringing moral guidance in the various daily problems of the population, such as demography control, spiritual renewal, ethnic policies, the adherence of the hierarchy to the MRND system opened an era of uncritical alignment on the politics of the regime. Such an alignment reached its zenith when the archbishop insisted that some Catholic orders including the Benebikira Sisters's Congregation should practise the politics of ethnic balance in naming a Hutu Superior. Equally in 1988, Father Muvala was forced to renounce his ordination as bishop, officially for 'personal reasons', but according to credible sources because of his Tutsi background⁵⁰³.

Erpicum and allies describe the episode as follows:

L'incapacité de l'église de dépasser en son propre sein les problèmes ethniques la rend incapable d'apporter en cette matière une réponse à la société. L'affaire de la nomination rapportée de l'abbé Muvara et sa coloration ethnique, et une série d'autres faits moins connus montrent que cette église reste bien humaine, trop humaine. Aussi, lorsqu'à l'occasion du voyage du pape, les évêques ont publié des lettres pastorales communes concernant les problèmes de la société, ces propos ont été ressentis comme "théoriques" et n'apportant rien de concret. L'église Rwandaise ne pourra pas prononcer une parole prophétique tant qu'elle ne fera pas la vérité sur elle-même.⁵⁰⁴

Having opted to align with the MRND politics, the Church hierarchy was incapable of fulfilling a moral role in society. It was politically too closely linked to the MRND, whilst at the same time the clergy were handicapped by a lack of creativity and courage so as to challenge both their superiors and the regime. The Church became politically irrelevant for the oppressed population because it was incapable of articulating a prophetic message.

Erpicum and allies rightly say:

L'église n'apparaissait plus tellement comme 'guide moral' de la République, mais plutôt comme 'soutien servile'. L'attitude des responsables de l'église ne faisait pas l'unanimité dans le clergé et chez les fidèles plus critiques. Aussi, beaucoup se sont réjoui quand, sous la pression du Vatican, l'archevêque renonça à son rôle politique.⁵⁰⁵

As indicated in the beginning of this section, all the segments of the Churches were enrolled in the MRND system. To be fair to the Catholics it must be said that there was even a sharp competition among the ordinary members of the Church and the clergy in the race to be co-opted into the MRND organs. Both clergy and laity became more committed to MRND than

⁵⁰²Nationalisation of the schools, expulsion of the director of Kinyamateka, Father Enzo Maida and the imprisonment of the Rwandan journalist, F.Semusambi. *Reyntjens, Pouvoir et Droit*, 1985, p.400/401.

⁵⁰³Father Muvala was named coadjutor bishop of the Catholic diocese of Butare. An announcement regarding his 'resignation' was made a few days only before the date of the ordination. The official explanation given in the announcement about the incident was 'for personal reason' but everyone in Rwanda knew that it was an ethnic plot organised by the regime with the full co-operation of Archbishop.

⁵⁰⁴Erpicum & al., *Le Rwanda et Maintenant*, Brussels: COOPIBO & al, 1990, p.31).

⁵⁰⁵Erpicum, op.cit. p.30.

to the Gospel. Some members of the clergy would justify their involvement in MRND by saying that it was instrumental in allowing them to fulfil a humanitarian role. With regard to the Catholic Archbishop, the defenders of his engagement in MRND would say that he was able to visit the prisons - which were his area of preference⁵⁰⁶ - and make many donations. After all "Rwanda is not Chile, it is a tolerant regime, relatively clean".

These relations were constantly referred to by some missionaries as being an option of the Church for the "camp of the oppressed"⁵⁰⁷. However, the argument does not stand up before the criticism about his omission to take a critical distance vis-à-vis the abuse of human rights by the regime. Hence the accuracy of the observation made by D. Forrester about the necessary precaution to take when Christian leaders frequent the political powers. He put it as follows: "The theologian should be close to the powerful and the experts, but not 'at home' among them- familiar with the corridors of power, but not at ease with them. For theology is both a speaking of truth to power and a voice for the powerless and marginalized, for the victims, who have a special place in the Kingdom"⁵⁰⁸.

Similarly, Schonecke, the general secretary of the East Africa Conferences of Catholic Bishops, assessed the relations of the Church with both the colonial administration and the republican regimes. He pointed out the fact that after the government, the Catholic Church was the single most powerful institution in the land through its network of social institutions. He then noticed that the political involvement in favour of social justice was alienated by closeness to the regimes to such an extent that their many "declarations during the genocide were insignificant and inadequate". For Schonecke, the "events in Rwanda reinforce a lesson of history: a Church too closely identified with a regime shares its fate"⁵⁰⁹. If the Church-state relationships did not provide a moral and spiritual guidance, they had fulfilled other functions very well as we shall see in the next paragraphs.

IV. 5.1.2. Extending the Church's Influence

The Church inherited a dominant position from the colonial administration in the sphere of social services⁵¹⁰. It is true that their coverage of the whole country lessened the shock of some governmental insufficiencies. However, from an ethical perspective the contribution of the Churches in bringing about the moral well-being of the population was not evident. These services were not used to promote justice and mercy for example in questioning their *raison d'être* in an environment where human rights were abundantly violated; they were not used to

⁵⁰⁶ The Archbishop erected several chaplaincy buildings or expanded the prisons; he donated radios and other things.

⁵⁰⁷ De Barrini, J., "L'Eglise, maîtresse au Rwanda, servante au Burundi". *Le Monde*, August 1988

⁵⁰⁸ Forrester, D., *Theology and Politics*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988, p. 163.

⁵⁰⁹ Schonecke, W., *op.cit.*, p.2.

⁵¹⁰ The Roman Catholic Church then promoted rural and urban projects, rent crops, coffee; reforestation and so forth. In economics, it developed a network of printing companies, in Kabgayi, Kigali, Butare, Nyundo; it ran a network of supermarkets called 'Economat-Generaux' of import-export exempted from custom taxes in each diocese; it had a parallel system of exchange of foreign currency, a practice that was an offence but tolerated by the Government in the case of the Catholic Church.

serve the poor and the marginalised first; nor to oppose the institutional injustices. Father Schonecke,⁵¹¹ expressed the same feeling as follows.

Above all, the Church as a body did not really engage itself in an effective struggle for justice and reconciliation, the only long-term basis for true development. Having access to foreign currency for projects, many Church leaders developed life styles that alienated them from the struggle of common people and made them appear part of the exploitative upper class. The huge efforts of building up these structures does not seem to have brought about a genuine evangelisation of people and of society. Strong and well-organised social institutions do not guarantee either long-term development or the building up of true faith communities. They can only be effective on condition that society is built on principles of political and economic justice and respect for fundamental human rights⁵¹².

The network of socio- economic institutions including schools, hospitals and health centres, rural development projects and income generating activities like the industry of tourism in Guest Houses or 'Economat Généraux' owned by the Churches made of them the most influential institution after the State. That they were made to generate profit rather than being a trampoline for addressing the burning issues of society so as to deepen evangelisation was obvious. Truly, these institutions would have been the tools for peace if they were used to initiate and sponsor peace and justice activities, to educate questioning generations on Human rights. In the end, it was the regime which benefited from both this vast network of the Churches' social and economic activities as well as from their absence of criticism. It also exploited the pietistly mass conversions which proliferated in the 1980s/90s. But, in the end, the absence of criticism was a trap of the regime as in any other system where the rulers have silenced the prophets as it is well described in the Rwandan cultural based anecdote of the 'king of Bwidishyi'⁵¹³.

IV. 5.1.3. Catechism in Place of Theology.

Theological activities in the Church have long been restricted to the catechism published mostly by European missionaries⁵¹⁴. Within Catholic Church, these catechisms had their origin in Cardinal Lavigerie's instructions to his missionaries. As mentioned in Chapter Three, Lavigerie wanted to recruit, form and equip local elites capable of inducing the conversions of the population. In rare cases, the local clergy pioneered what they called the indigenisation of the Church. However they did not initiate an authentic theological stream⁵¹⁵. Rwandan Christians were then nurtured in an intolerant form of catechism⁵¹⁶.

⁵¹¹General-Secretary of the AMECEA, the Association of the Roman Catholic Episcopal Conferences of East Africa.

⁵¹² Schonecke, W., op.cit.p.4.

⁵¹³ In a mythical kingdom of Bwidishyi, a young came on power. He nominated on the positions of responsibility the young subjects and told them to applaud to whatever he would say or do. But before he had ordered his subjects to kill all the old persons to avoid the overdue charges they imposed to his regime. A single young person succeeded to hid his old father. One day he saw a zebra and appreciated its coloured skin. He hunted and killed the zebra and ordered that his subjects dress him properly with the skin of the animal all over his body. But then, as the skin started to dry it squeezed the king. He started crying and saying : Ndapfuye Bidishyi ("I am dying people of Bwidishyi"). The young lads would respond, "Yes, you are dying Mwidishyi"! This went on till the young king was agonising. Not only the young followers were afraid of opposing the orders of their lord, but also did not know neither the consequences of the squeezing nor how to liberate him. When the young lad who had hide his father recounted to his refugee the unpleasant story at the palace, the old person, realising the danger, offered to give assistance. Freed, at the least, the young king ordered that the ignoble act be revoked.

⁵¹⁴ Respectively, Brard , Arnoux, Delmas, Van der mersch; see Van der Meersch, op.cit. p. 110.

⁵¹⁵Van der Meersch (Father),J., *Le catéchuménat au Rwanda. De 1900 a nos jours*, Kigali: Pallotti presses 1993. The rare local theologians were involved in the inculturation theology: Mgr Aloys Bigirumwami (+ 1986); Father

Further research can establish the link between this absence of articulated theology and Christian teaching with the proliferation of diverse forms of spirituality such as the Kibeho apparitions which occurred from 1981.

IV. 5.1.4. Kibeho's 'Apparitions': Filling in a Vacuum

From the 28 November 1981, in the Kibeho parish⁵¹⁷ some young people claimed to have had revelations from the Virgin Mary and Jesus. These children came from various educational backgrounds: some were uneducated and illiterate, some were at Primary schools, and others were at secondary schools. According to the children, the divine visitors would request among other things that both the Church hierarchy and the public authorities⁵¹⁸ as well as the population repent and be devoted to the Virgin Mary. The authorities, including the President, were requested "to work for both the nation and the Church and to never be ashamed for manifesting publicly their faith while proclaiming the word of God"⁵¹⁹. The 'visionaries' received also the message to adore, respect, love and revere the Mother of the Word. Those who reject the Rosary, the images and statutes of the Virgin Mary had to amend their ways⁵²⁰. Some among the 'visionaries' including Segatashya, a young illiterate lad, claimed to have been called to spread the message outside Rwanda and went into Burundi and the R.D.Congo⁵²¹.

With few exceptions the children were from poor milieus, impoverished large families with often separated parents, having difficulties in gaining access to schools. Their only possibility of earning the basic minimum for a decent life in Rwanda ; many among the visionaries were of lower performance and moral standards⁵²². Some commentators invoked these factors to dismiss the genuine character of the revelations.

Kagame (+1982). Kagame translated the Roman Missal (oration and lectionary), the Psalms and the New Testament with some books of the Old Testament; he published on the inculturation. But in refusing to apply the principles of dynamic-equivalence, his Bible translation remained rigid and heavily accessible to most Christians.

Father B. Muzungu, who after being professor of theology in his exile in Kinshasa from 1960 returned in Rwanda to pursue his work on the African theology. In his threefold volumes, "Le Dieu des Nos Pères" (Bujumbura, 1974-1981). Outside these pioneers, little has been written.

⁵¹⁶ There was only extracts of the Bible de Acker for schools which part was re-edited in 1947 under the title "Bibliya Gatolika. Amateka ya Yezu Kristu" (Catholic Bible. The life of Jesus). Van der Meersch, op.cit. p.123.

⁵¹⁷ Founded in 1934 and placed under the patronage of "Mary the Mother of God", Kibeho was then a parish of the Catholic diocese of Butare. From 1992, Kibeho became part of the newly created diocese of Gikongoro.

⁵¹⁸ Misago, A (Mgr.), *Les apparitions de Kibeho au Rwanda*, Kinshasa: Facultés de théologie catholique, 1991. See also Maindron, G (Father), *Les apparitions de Kibeho. Annonce de Marie au Cœur de l'Afrique*, Paris: O.E.I.L., 1984.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid. p.400.

⁵²⁰ Ibid. 181.

⁵²¹ A 15 years old boy who started illiterate, Segatashya was shortly baptised. He went in Burundi in early 1986, ignoring the order of the Burundian authorities who had already cancelled his visa. He could not preach. He rather sojourned in Congo (Zaire) from March 1986 to May 1988 where he learnt three major languages of the country in a record time (Swahili, Lingala and Chiluba) and started to preach without translator. This brought Mgr. Misago to say that "if that was not from a divine force, Segatashya was a genius". Ibid.p.

⁵²² Opened by Alphonsine Mumureka, 16 years old, a pupil is the first year of the girls' college, the presumed apparitions then spread rapidly in the school and the environment. Anathalie Mukamazimpaka, from Tuesday 12 January 1982, Marie Claire Mukangango, from 2 March 1982. From the 18 August 1992, Valentine Nyiramukiza, 17 ans, a pupil in Primary School 8; Setephanie Mukamurenzi, 14 ans, primary 6, and from the 25 th May 1982, Vestina Salima, 24 ans, who never could pass her primary school and was living at home; from July 1982, Segatashya, a 15 years boy, illiterate and non Christian. From then on the number of the visionaries multiplied in such way that on December 31, 1983, there were 33 Misago. Misago. op.cit. p. 292.

Nonetheless, the events achieved a national and international notoriety which gathered thousands of pilgrims. The apparitions lasted several months, sporadically from 1990 onwards. They also divided the Church and the country into the partisans and opponents whilst the hierarchy, in particular, the local bishop, remained silent pretending to wait for the conclusions of two ad-hoc commissions⁵²³.

The insistence upon using the devotional objects⁵²⁴ emerged from a non ecumenical and sustainable theology which contributed to a reinforcement of an attitude of rivalry between the two Christian families, Catholic and Protestant. The apparitions hardened the religious language and raised ecumenical problems in an already precarious context. According to Misago, the 'visionaries' who were born in families and milieus marked with religious syncretism, contributed by language to the deterioration of the already fragile relations between Catholics and Protestants⁵²⁵. What Misago was saying implicitly was that the apparitions exhumed the old quarrels marked with intolerance between Protestants and Catholics in which the former accused the latter to be idolatrous whilst the latter accused Protestants to be sectarians, even irreligious. The conflict was evoked by the late Mgr Bigirumwami, emeritus bishop of Nyundo, in less than ecumenical language in his letter to Father Maindron.

le déchaînement diabolique contre la Mère de Dieu entre 1979 et 1981. Les iconoclastes endiablés ont enlevé et cassé les statues placées dans nos églises et au carrefour des routes, à travers tout le Rwanda, et les voix autorisées n'ont par alors protesté contre ces faits sacrilèges⁵²⁶.

The apparitions also raised the issue of the political exploitation of religious pietism. It seems that Habyarimana's religious fervour allowed him to infiltrate the movement. The emphasis of the visionaries on obedience to the regime and to the co-operation between the ecclesial and public authorities reinforced the idea that Rwandan Christianity was a religious opium.

Epicum & al put it this way:

Ce phénomène religieux a été mêlé d'un certain caractère politique (des proches du Président étaient parmi les plus fervents disciples de Kibeho) et nationaliste (les prêtres étrangers qui avaient osé soulever quelques questions à propos de Kibeho se sont vus accusés de collusion avec Voerster et l'Afrique du Sud). A-t-on assisté à un authentique approfondissement spirituel chrétien porteur d'engagement? Ou bien est-ce un mécanisme de 'fuite dans le religion-opium du peuple'⁵²⁷.

Epicum is right to underline the interference of the political authorities in the Kibeho apparitions. Most of the time, there has been a pressure from political circles towards the Catholic hierarchy and on the Vatican to officially recognise and proclaim Kibeho as an authentic site of apparitions of the Virgin Mary. Though many signs indicate that the

⁵²³ Even the Pope infuriated the partisans when he refused to make any reference to them during his 1990 visit. However, in 1988 the local bishop Mgr J.B. Gahamanyi authorised a "Public Cult of the Virgin" in Kibeho without stating the official position of the Church.

⁵²⁴ The list non exhaustive, presented by Misago included the rosary, the salute of the saints and feast of the Sacrament, the path of the cross, the devotion of the Sacred Heart la devotion au Sacred Heart, the months of S. Joseph, and the St Virgin, the processions of Palm Sunday as described by Father Van der Meersch formed a "mentality of the magic like the talismans used to appease".

⁵²⁵ Misago, op.cit. p.421.

⁵²⁶ Maindron, G., *Les apparitions de Kibeho*. In his letter to Father Maindron (August 1984), the later Mgr Emeritus, Aloys Bigirumwami, felicitated the author for his initiative to write a book that would radiate the 'Mère du Verbe' (the Mother of the Verb)".

⁵²⁷ Epicum & al, op.cit. p.31.

Archbishop of Kigali (Primate of the Catholic Church) was sympathetic to the petitions⁵²⁸, he could do little for he was not the bishop of the place.

But then, the hierarchy abandoned those among the members of the clergy who had serious questions about the credibility of the assumed apparitions, alone to face the aggressive lobby and attacks coming from outside and inside the Church. The Kibeho events raised controversies because of the external interference suspected to be motivated by financial and political interests. Mgr. Misago noticed that among the public authorities who interfered was C. Mfizi, head of the Office of Information (ORINFOR) which was a sort of a Propagandist agency for the President. Suspecting an eventual political manipulation, Misago also remarked that one of the visionaries, Alphonsine, was regularly invited into the Mfizis and even into the private residence of President Habyarimana in Gisenyi⁵²⁹.

It seems to this writer that the regime had tried to create an intimacy with the visionaries so as to infiltrate the movement in giving to the teenagers its own version and perspective on the Rwandan reality, in particular on issues of ethnic relations. Hence, in 1990 when the war broke out, and later in 1993/4, during the blockage of the implementation of the Arusha Peace Agreement, there were unbelievably large scale rumours spread about the inevitability of bloodshed events on a large-scale because "the Kibeho visionaries predicted them"⁵³⁰. In fact, the presumed apparitions played a significant part in the fatalism and inevitability of the bloodshed conflict. This was recognised by Father Maindron.

Les voyants ont parfois pleuré, claqué les dents, ou tremblé, se sont effondrés plusieurs fois de tout le poids de leur corps... Les enfants voyaient des images terrifiantes, un fleuve de sang, des gens qui s'entre-tuent, des cadavres abandonnés sans quelqu'un pour les enterrer, un arbre tout en feu, un gouffre béant, un monstre, des têtes décapitées. La foule, environ 20,000 personnes, a gardé une impression de peur, voir de panique et de tristesse.⁵³¹

Surprised and unprepared, the hierarchy took time before it started to reflect on how to provide moral and pastoral guidance. They created a medical and theological commissions which pursued the monitoring of the apparitions. At the eve of the 1994 tragic events, the commissions had not yet published their report.

Without pretending to interpret these events which root far beyond the scoop of this research, it must however be noted that the Kibeho events occurred during a period of a vacuum in the Church theology. They also occurred at a period Rwanda was experiencing social crises: poverty, inaccessibility to education, hopelessness among the youths, absence of good examples of fidelity to the Gospel and last but not least, political turmoil. It may be that Kibeho was an expression from the grass-roots of a national outrage against moral, social and

⁵²⁸ The archbishop built a memorial of the Virgin Mary on the Mount Jari Hill, opposite to the capital, Kigali; he organised several rallies and his sermons and public speeches versed abundantly into the Marylogy teaching constantly referring to the presence of the Virgin in Rwanda.

⁵²⁹ Misago, op.cit. p.366; 400.

⁵³⁰ Many people including two couples highly educated, known by the present author who were engaged in one of the prayers groups which proliferated in the aftermath of the Kibeho 'apparitions' always referred to the crisis prior to the 1994 tragedy as "the inevitable indication of the apocalypse announce by the Kibeho visionaries".

⁵³¹ Ibid. 183.

political decay⁵³². Could it be that the Church lacked its touch with the reality of people, then an effort must be done to rethink its ecclesiology. The Protestants to whom we turn now was not in a better position with regard to deepening its theology into the real concerns of people.

IV. 5.2. Protestant hierarchy

Like their counterparts Catholic, the Protestant hierarchy, as stated earlier have adhered to the MRND policies. The Roman Catholic drew its adhesion to the MRND system from both its historical relationships with political power and its monarchical organisation. With regard to Protestants, the history of adhesion to political power can be traced to the regime of Habyarimana. Two particular aspects which might have contributed to push the Protestants in the hands of the MRND system must be underlined.

Firstly, there was a dramatic absence of an adequate training of the leadership. With a few exceptions, the generation which took over responsibility from the missionaries in the 1960s had relatively low intellectual and theological background. Some were former missionary-workers, others were former teachers or catechists who trained on the field. It seems that because of that difference in intellectual capacities, the Protestant hierarchy was not taken seriously by their Catholic counterparts. Consequently, the interest of President Habyarimana towards Protestant leaders appeared to the later an act of rescue from religious and political marginality to which they responded in keeping silence about the burning issues. It could be also that the absence of a solid educational background prevented to articulate theologically the connection needed between the Church teachings out of its identity of Word, Sacraments, Prayer and Liturgy, on the one hand, and on the other, the problems of society, political, economic, social impasses⁵³³.

Secondly, the Protestants struggled for their survival in the immediate aftermath of the independence. In fact, they were pushed in the state of marginality. Despite the progress made by Vatican II in the ecumenical matters, if Protestants were not simply ignored⁵³⁴, they

⁵³² During the 1994 tragedy, horrific massacres were committed in the Churches in Kibeho where more than 8000 people were slain. During the so-called French Turquoise intervention which covered the Kibeho area, a camp of more than 200,000 persons was built on the site. In 1995 it became a theatre of other tragic events. The Rwandan Patriotic Army intervened on April 21 and dismantled the camps whose occupants were suspected to include the Interahamwe militia. 380 people were left dead according to the governmental reports; for the humanitarian organisations, there were more than 4000 victims.

⁵³³ There existed from 1970 a school of theology in Butare for all the Protestant Churches. The first Faculty of Theology started in 1990 in the same compound. At that time, the Protestant Churches had only two Doctors in theology who for no elucidated reasons were teaching in the Faculty. During the inauguration of the first Faculty of theology, the Chairman of the Board, Revd Twagirayesu made a triumphant assessment praising the School for having graduated 80 laureates in its 20 years of existence! Distributed among the members of the institution (the Presbyterian Church, the 8 dioceses of the Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church, the Baptist Church, the Pentecost Church) the triumphalism is surprising. See Isangano, the Journal of the Protestant Faculty of theology of Butare, no 2, 1991, pp. 6-9

⁵³⁴ For example, a brochure produced in 1968 by the Roman Catholic bishops of in Burundi, Congo and Rwanda blankly presented Rwanda in two section, one showing the statistics of the Catholic population, and another showing the percentage of pagans: Catholiques: 43 %; Catechumens: 9%; pagans: 48 % with the following comment: In 1963 Burundi and Rwanda had : 5.368.399 inhabitants of whom : 2.351.711 Catholics; 430.4888 Catechumenes and 2.586.200 pagans. In 1968, the document indicated that Rwanda and Burundi would have 52 % of Catholics; 9 % Catechumens, 39 % Pagans.

Eglise Catholique, Plan quinquennal de développement, Bujumbura et Kigali: Conférence des Ordinaires du Rwanda et du Burundi, 1968, pp.10 & 42.

were merely suspected of being favourable to the *inyenzi*'.⁵³⁵ Thus, Protestants paid the bill for the 'pro-monarchical' sympathies manifested at the eve of the 1959 Revolution. Instead of focusing on promoting a leadership committed to being in solidarity with the poor, the hierarchy constituted a clique of the so-called "Représentants Légeaux des Eglises" (legal representatives), controlling the authority in the manner of a monarchical government. Many of them introduced diverse symbols to manifest their control of power, such as the phenomenon of flags on bishops' cars.⁵³⁶ Others would manipulate constitutions and elections to continue as leaders⁵³⁷. Some would distribute privileges, recruit candidates to scholarships and to different posts of responsibility with the procedures borrowed from government. Many observers think that these practices were borrowed from the unique ruling party system. H.H. Osborn accurately puts it as follows:

For the Churches, this dilemma was more acute than for the government. It was not difficult for political leaders to be chosen on ethnic grounds. The majority ethnic group had triumphed in the revolution and political justifications were understandable. It was a more difficult problem in the Church where spiritual qualifications were held to be more important than ethnic or political ones. In practice, leaders were chosen from the dominant ethnic grouping who were also considered to be spiritually fit for office.⁵³⁸

In all the Protestant denominations members of the Protestant Council⁵³⁹, (CPR) no single Church Leader was from a Batutsi background. With the Catholic Church on the eve of the 1994 tragedy, 3 diocesan bishops out of 9 were associated with Batutsi background. This absence of inclusiveness in the Churches might have had a political implication, the unchallenged sympathy with the rulers of a same group identity⁵⁴⁰. But it would be too simple to suggest that Church leaders of one ethnic background should have no bearing upon repression and oppression affecting the other community, or that leaders of Batutsi would have done better.

Osborn's accurate remark on Rwanda illustrates the ambiguous position of Christianity in African political regimes where prophetic voices have been silenced as described by the Camerounian Catholic theologian J-M.Ela: "In black Africa, the vast majority of the religious authorities are chosen, admitted or tolerated only on the condition that they keep silent on the essential problems of black life". In a dominated society, where structures have been eternally imposed on people, where the "voice of the gospel is stifled in order to guarantee the stability of unpopular regimes or the prosperity of foreign investments", a theology

⁵³⁵ Nkunuzumwami, E. 1996.

⁵³⁶ During an interview with a commission including the present author appointed by the Protestant Council to identify the root cause of the conflict within the Anglican Church of Rwanda (inquiry realised in 1990), one bishop said in jubilation his "pride to have been the first person to introduce for the first time in the Church, the flags on the bishops' cars".

⁵³⁷ In 1996, the General Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda, introduced a clause restricting the service to two terms of four years for the President of the Church. "This, we hope will end the speculations of those who have been manipulating the constitutions to last for ever" said the new president, Dr Karamaga, interview in Kigali, March 1997.

⁵³⁸ Osborn, H.H., *Fire in the hills. The revival that come from Rwanda*, Crowborough, East Essex: Highland books, 1991. p. 220

⁵³⁹ One Presbyterian Church, 8 episcopalian dioceses, one Seven Day Adventist; 2 Baptist Churches; 1 Methodist Church and One Pentecostal Church.

⁵⁴⁰ See also Chapter III.8.3.

cannot arise, nor it is "easy to do theology in countries where the churches almost seem to be pillars of the neo-colonial state"⁵⁴¹.

With regard to the relations between the Protestant hierarchy and the Habyarimana regime, it must be noted that vis-à-vis the Protestant leaders, the President took a positive stance from that of his predecessor. He would relieve the atmosphere by acceding to some of their demands regarding, for example, authorisation for building schools, hospitals and health centres and other projects. The President would participate in commemorative ceremonies such as Church ordinations and make donations⁵⁴². He would even mediate when some of them quarrelled. During his 12 years in power, Kayibanda (Habyarimana's predecessor) did not recruit any single Protestant, Habyarimana made a difference in eventually naming from time to time a Protestant member in his Cabinet. Protestant Church leaders were also named in the Party organs on various levels and as such were automatic members of the ruling party Congress. The Church hierarchy was integrated in the state protocol together with their Catholic counterparts and were given diplomatic consideration⁵⁴³. For the first time, the Protestant hierarchy felt emancipated, representing institutions that counted in a society where one Church had always been dominant. Thus they became blind to the practices of injustices as they wittingly endorsed their incorporation into the ruling party.

IV. 5.2.1. Colluding with the MRND Regime

One of the manifestations of the collusion of the Protestant Church elite with the MRND regime was the messages of congratulations and support sent regularly by different Church bodies to the General-President. In these messages of unequivocal support there was no single reference to the arbitrary measures and unjust policies that were practised by the regime. As shown in the following example of Church P⁵⁴⁴., like its catholic counterpart, the Protestant hierarchy was not only sympathising with the regime but even being its loudspeaker.

Messages of the Church P. to 'General- President' of Rwanda (1984-1993).

Meeting on July in R. July 21 - 25 1986, the Church.P. sent the following message:

Ce message de soutien et de solidarité pour les efforts combien louables avec lesquels vous ne cessez de conduire inlassablement et efficacement le peuple Rwandais rassemble au sein du MRND vers son développement harmonieux dans la paix et l'unité nationale. ... A cet effet, l' Eglise P. condamne

⁵⁴¹ Ela,J-M, *My Faith as an African*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis books, 1995, p.176.

⁵⁴² For example, during the ordination of the Anglican bishop of Shyira (the stronghold of the president) the president gave to the donated a Car, solar telephone, electricity to bishop Nshamihigo, who would later become a controversial Anglican Archbishop.

⁵⁴³ The official roll presented as follow: 'President-Fondateur'; 2. the General Secretary of the Ruling Party; 3. the members of the "Junta: Comité Pour la Paix et l'Unité nationale" ; 4. the members of the Ruling Party Central Committee; 5. the Speaker of the Parliament and the President of the Constitutional Court; 6. The ambassadors and the Legal Representatives of the Churches.

⁵⁴⁴ Church P. The research in the archives of Church P. were authorised by the ecclesial authorities. However, the issue regarding the handling of the material in the norms legally recognised, i.e. the period required before the archive sources were publishable was not settled out. For that reason, that Church will be referred to as Church P. but its full address is kept within the list of informants who requested anonymity.

l'attitude anarchique fantaisiste et destructrice à certains égards des sectes qui s'infiltrèrent dans le pays en interdisant la participation à la vie civique. Nous louons Dieu par Jésus-Christ du fait qu'aucun des membres effectifs de l'église P. n'a été emporté par ces fausses doctrines. Notre conviction fondamentale qui détermine notre enseignement est que ceux qui s'opposent à l'autorité sous prétexte quelconque résiste à l'ordre de Dieu et attireront une condamnation sur eux -mêmes car l'autorité est au service de Dieu pour le bien-être de l'homme (Rom 13.2-4). La recherche de la prospérité pour notre pays et l'intercession auprès du Seigneur de l'univers en sa faveur constitue les principes fondamentaux de notre engagement chrétien. La prospérité de l'église dépendra de la prospérité du peuple Rwandais (Jer 29.7).⁵⁴⁵

This unsolicited support was formulated during the crucial period of the repression of the adherents of some religious movements as mentioned above. These included some tendencies in the some Churches; the *Jehovah Witnesses*, *Abantu b'Imana (God's people)* et les *Abarokole(the born-again)* in 1986. This message of Church P. clearly attacks the activities of those religious movements described as developing an "attitude anarchique fantaisiste et destructrice". The message uses Romans 13 to give a theological argument to a clear appeal to the state repressive machinery to eventually violate the freedom of conscience and worship which is a universal right.

Actually, this state repression left at least 15 dead and 300 arrested who were condemned for up to 15 years of prison⁵⁴⁶. The repression stopped following international pressure. The Church leaders have since then been unashamed of their position. An overseas worker in the Protestant Churches commented on the complicity of the Churches with such a repressive regime as follows:

...les adhérents de ces sectes, venus de divers milieux et pour la vaste majorité de simples paysans, mettent tout simplement en pratique la conviction classique de la Réforme. A savoir que chaque chrétien a le droit et même l'obligation de s'asseoir dans son coin, de lire la Bible et de trouver lui-même la vérité de la foi, sans intermédiaire ecclésiastique qui lui dirait ce qu'il faut croire. Les autorités civiles ne devraient-elles pas essayer de déchiffrer le message qu'expriment ces groupes d'une manière inconsciente, un message de mécontentement contre certains abus de pouvoir et du fossé existant entre les paroles et les actes?... en entendant les discours, c'est l'état qui accorde la liberté de religion et les privilèges aux Eglises eu égard à leur bon comportement en général et leur engagement pour le développement du pays en particulier. Que faire donc de groupements religieux qui sont 'inutiles', même "ingrats"? On les interdit, on leur retire le droit de liberté religieuse, Et ce peut-être pour plaire aux Eglises établies qui craignent une certaine concurrence⁵⁴⁷.

The author ended with a warning borrowed from Niemoller's famous declaration about his fellow Germans' indifference vis-à-vis the Nazi repression. He underlined the confession of Niemoller who admitted that for having feared to speak out in favour of the various groups like the Communists and the Jews on the grounds that he was neither Communist nor Jew, when he himself was arrested, there was no-one left to speak on his behalf. "What happened to those groups in Nazi Germany", H. said, "could happen to us in other circumstances". Words of prophecy!

Irrespective of these warnings, the Church persisted in congratulating the dictator. They would find superlatives like "you have sealed the pact of peace, unity and love with your population". The Church leadership went to great lengths to admit that the President

⁵⁴⁵ Archives of the P. Church; Collection of the author.

⁵⁴⁶ Reyntjens, F, 1986. p.291

⁵⁴⁷ K, h11., *Sectes et Esprit Protestant. Dialogue*, no 129, Juillet - Août 1988, p.117-121.

challenged their incapacity to formulate a moral, spiritual and cultural education of the young people as well as a Christian commitment to the poor.

1987: the Church P. meeting in R, 20 to 25 J. wrote:

Le pacte de paix et d'unité en vue du développement de notre peuple dans la ligne des idéaux du MRND nous interpelle encore. Votre amour du peuple Rwandais notamment des déshérités que vous avez encore tout récemment manifesté vis-à-vis des Impunyu et des Abanyambo nous plonge dans un soucis permanent de formuler un message crédible à l'attention des pauvres.

The P. Church congratulated the President for his humane attitudes in favour of the promotion of democratic justice and human rights; according to them, the President manifested such a humanness in releasing the "elements condemned for uncivil reasons". The Church promised to join hands with the public authorities to educate those released both morally and spiritually.

In June 1988 during a meeting of a governing body the Church P., reiterated its tendency to perpetuate and even to sacralise the Habyarimana's rule. The message whose copy consulted was only in Kinyarwanda, reads (our translation):

Excellence, Father of the Nation, the S. rejoiced because of the supreme decision taken by the 6th Congress of the MRND to re-elect you as president of the MRND for the next five years, thus we "militants" find in you, a potential candidate in the presidential elections. We fully support the confidence manifested in you by the participants to the Congress and we also have confidence in you. Excellency, the President of Republic and Founder- President of our Movement, your policy of unity and peace, pillars of development with which you command our country with fidelity and integrity, we owe it many good things which you helped us to realise; we are grateful to you. Thus the members of the Church P. will manifest their gratitude to you on the 19 of December 1988 in massively voting for you 100%⁵⁴⁸.

This position of Church P. with regard to assuring the President of 100% electoral support illustrates the competition between the Church leaderships and the elite who both hoped to gain the favours of the regime. Although Habyarimana was still popular within the confines of the single-ruling party which maintained a strict control of the conscience of individuals and society, the motives behind the Church P. leaders to promise such an electoral record remain suspicious. A serious doubt has been expressed by many observers of Rwandan politics over the willingness of all the population including the members of the Church. P. to vote en masse for him⁵⁴⁹. Nevertheless, the Church P. message implicitly endorses all forms of pressure and repression utilised by the MRND machinery to have the President elected 100%.

⁵⁴⁸ The original in Kinyarwanda reads: "Nyakubahwa mubyeyi w'igihugu, Itorero.P. yashimishijwe n'icyemezo cy'imena cyafashwe na kongere ya 6 isanzwe ya MRND cyo kongera kubatorera kuba Prezida wa Muvoma muri iyi myaka itanu iri imbere, bityo abamilitante n'abamilitant tukaba twarongeye kubabonamo umukandida mu Itora rya Prezida wa Republika. icyizere abakongresisita babagiriye, turagishyigikiye kandi natwe turakibafitiye. Nyakubahwa prezida wa Republika na Prezida Fondateri wa Muvoma yacu, Politiki yanyu y'ubumwe n'amahoro byo nkingi y'amajyambere muyoborana igihugu cyacu mu bwitonzi n'umurava, tuyikesha ibyiza byinshi mwatugejejeho; turabibashimira. Ibyo ngibyo abagize Itorero P. mu Rwanda tuzabibagaragariza kuwa 19 ukuboza 1988 tubahungazaho amajwi 100 %".

⁵⁴⁹ Nsengiyaremyeshows that like 1978 a significant section of the population and some regions did not respond to such pre-arranged elections. The score in favour of Habyarimana during the presidential elections of 1978 was so poor in some prefectures like Kibuye and Gikongoro achieving only 55 % (though the sole candidate authorises to 'compete') that they were forced to organise a second round. When the second round ended, the Prefet of the region, Dr Nyabyenda prevented the electoral jury to count the votes and announced on Radio Rwanda that the "100% which were awaited is now there!". Nsengiyaremy,D., op.cit.

It must be remembered that the elections of the President, the MPs and the councillors were presented on the unique list compiled by the MRND Central Committee which was chaired by none other than Habyarimana. The members of the Batutsi community and those considered as dissidents by the regime- though the term dissident was not officially utilised- were not allowed to present their candidature. Many questioned the *raison-d'être* of such elections if not the waste of energies and resources. Despite the era of passion for re-democratisation, the Church hierarchy remained trustful of Habyarimana. They perceived the process of redemocratisation as an intrusion in the fight for saving his rule. This is expressed in the Church P. message of 1993.

The 1993 Church P. Message to the 'Father of the Nation'

Meeting five days after the signing of the aforementioned Arusha Agreement the Church sent a message that had a reference to the recent political developments in the country. The Church leaders congratulated the President, adding their "witness of unfailing support".⁵⁵⁰ The message referred particularly to the multi-party politics and the prospects generated by the Arusha Agreement. But at the same time, it sounded a note of regret that the two processes, the redemocratisation and the Peace Agreement were threatening the President's authority. Additional editing was done by the authorities of the Church to dilute an initial critical text proposed by an ad-hoc group. The text reflects the traditional criticism of the religious establishment against the nascent opposition accused of a lack of loyalty to Habyarimana. It reads:

Le S. G félicite le peuple Rwandais du nouveau panorama politique marqué par le pluralisme politique, reflet d'un équilibre social et politique dans notre pays. Le Synode regrette, néanmoins les déviations de ce paysage marqué par:

- le relâchement de la cohésion des structures de l'état; la déstabilisation du pouvoir judiciaire;- les luttes malveillantes du pouvoir; l'intolérance entre les partis politiques;- la violation des droits de l'homme notamment, le droit à la vie; la dégradation des structures socio-économiques du pays, résultat de l'occupation du terrain social et politique par certains politiciens aux intérêts manifestement égoïstes et obscurs, visant la déstabilisation du pouvoir exécutif et judiciaire provoquant ainsi la désobéissance sociale⁵⁵¹.

The history and origin of this practise of sending messages of congratulation to the President remain a mystery according to information available. One thing which was clear, is the absence of any state pressure or inducement to do so. In addition, the research in the archives shows no single official acknowledgement of the Church P's messages from the office of the state President. This leaves only one conclusion: the messages were an authentic initiative from the Church. P. hierarchy wishing to please the ruler. If this was correct, then the problem of exploitation of power by the hierarchy beyond their ecclesial mandate on the one hand, and on the other, the relationships between public authorities and the Church elite is raised.

⁵⁵⁰ The participants added a positive note about the Peace accord. They saw it as a source of hope that would end the three years conflict, resolve the refugee problem and the displaced people problems, open the path for a peaceful co-existence. Ibid. *Message of P. Church. 9 to 14.A. 1993.*

⁵⁵¹ Church P. to President-Founder of MRND, President of the Republic of Rwanda. 1984-1990. Collection of the author.

The content of these messages did not represent a one-off initiative of course but a consistent act of loyalty that accompanied the regime from its beginning to its tragic end in 1994. It must be noted that this endorsement of the repressive system contrasted dramatically with the process at the grass-roots where the 1990s outbreak for re-democratisation had generated dynamics for energetic denunciation of human rights abuse; education in Human rights, democracy and reconciliation as previously outlined⁵⁵².

To obtain their credentials vis-à-vis the regime the ecclesial hierarchy sacrificed the rights of the poor, the marginalised and the oppressed; they sacrificed the capacity to be detached, to be able to offer a prophetic critique. As in Germany of the 1930 and 1940s, most of the population professed some Christian affiliation and membership. To paraphrase Rubenstein and Roth - who commented on the attitude of the German Churches vis-à-vis the persecution of the Jews no doubt some among the Christians swore loyalty to Habyarimana "knowing they had forsaken Christian principles, but the tragedy beyond is that in spite of Protestant and Catholic dissent, so many did so with the slightest feelings that they had betrayed their religious identity"⁵⁵³.

On the eve of the crisis, nearer 80 % of the 8,6 million Rwandans were still declaring themselves as members of Catholic and Protestant Churches. Even the majority of the MRND and CDR party members and the Interahamwe militia were attending the Sunday service and taking the Eucharist.⁵⁵⁴ Clearly, had Rwandans of all denominations, their bishops and leaders called Christians and the world-wide Christian family to rally together against the massacres of the innocents, the genocide would have remained inconceivable.

Another area of difficulty which handicapped the capacity for a common initiative was the quarrels within the Protestant denominations, particularly among the Anglican (Episcopal) bishops.

IV. 5.2.2. Shameful Face of Protestantism

Quarrels and divisions have been one of the characteristics of some Protestant denominations including the Episcopal Church and the Association of the Baptist Churches from Illinois (USA). The Episcopal Church up to the 1970s was by far the largest Protestant Church. It covered almost the whole geographical territory. Like the Presbyterians, it had a relatively good number of social services and influence in evangelism resulting from the Revival which started in Gahini in 1930s. On the eve of the 1994 tragedy, the Episcopal Church had twelve bishops for eight dioceses. The first diocese was created in 1965 covering the whole country with Adonia Sebunguri, a former missionary-aide, as its bishop. The second diocese was formed in the early 1970s, in Butare, covering half of the country from the centre and the south. Reverend Ndandari was nominated its bishop.

⁵⁵² See chapter VI.

⁵⁵³ Roth, J & Rubenstein, R., *Approaches to Auschwitz*, Louisville.KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1987.

⁵⁵⁴ Matthew Ndirumpatse, the General secretary of the MRND and pioneer of the creation of the Interahamwe. A Ph.D. in Law and musician, he was founder and director of a very important Christian choir at St Michael parish, in Kigali.

The quarrels between these two first bishops started at that period over the sharing of patrimony between the dioceses. However, the conflict broke out publicly in early 1975 during the process of constituting a third diocese at Shyira. Each of the two bishops presented his own candidate for the province's nominee separately. Finally, Sebununguri's candidate, A. Nshamihigo, a former Army Chaplain, was elected⁵⁵⁵. Ndandari heavily resented his defeat which was reinforced by his failure to secure a second mandate as Archbishop of *Rwanda, Burundi and Boga-Zaire* Province. His successor, Samuel Sindamuka from Burundi formed a partnership with Sebununguri of the Kigali diocese and Nshamihigo of Shyira. These three urged Ndandari to hand over the Archbishop's office. When Ndandari (Butare) resisted, they revoked him from being an Anglican bishop. The Rwandan Government got involved in the conflict. The Minister of Justice signed a decree approving what the group had called the "replacement of Bishop Ndandari by bishop Nshamihigo due to his mandate which has ended"⁵⁵⁶.

The Justice Minister's decision raised a series of protestations in Ndandari's diocese of Butare. An unprecedented event happened when 49 ministers organised a protest demonstration wearing their pastoral robes, holding their Bibles and placards, from 13th to 19th May 1991 at the ministry of Justice in Kigali. Then to no avail, the other Protestant Church leaders pleaded for reconciliation before the Minister, Bishops Sindamuka, Sebununguri and Nshamihigo.⁵⁵⁷

There have been various interpretations of this decision, the most advanced being that Nshamihigo wanted to move from the remote Shyira to a central diocese to fulfil his ambition to become archbishop.⁵⁵⁸ Meanwhile, to anticipate the plan concocted by his rivals to create a new Province limited to Rwanda in which he would be isolated, Bishop Ndandari divided his diocese of Butare and ordained four bishops.⁵⁵⁹ The ordination was rejected by the Province's group with the claim that the Anglican communion endorses ordination from at least three active bishops acting collectively. Finally, the Anglican Communion started a mediation which ended in 1992 with a new arrangement: A. Nshamihigo was elected archbishop of the

⁵⁵⁵Which was still including Burundi, Rwanda and Zaire.

⁵⁵⁶The decree was published in the *Journal Officiel of the Republic of Rwanda*, no 9, May 1991, p.473. In the former Belgian colonies, Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire, each non-governmental organisation including the Churches and their representatives must be agreed by a governmental decree.

⁵⁵⁷The four members of the Commission were appointed in May 1990 by the Executive of the Protestant Council Church leaders. Outside the present author, the group included Bishop A. Ruhumuriza and Revd P. Munyagisaka (Methodists), Revd I. Muzigamfizi (Presbyterian). In its report presented to the Protestant Council Church leaders in February 1991, the commission recommended among other things not to interfere with each other matters and to respect the constitutions of both the Province and the individual dioceses.

⁵⁵⁸Ndandari rejected the decision. Consequently, a letter of 5 June 1990 from Archbishop Sindamuka, written at Nairobi dismissed Ndandari as bishop in the Episcopal Church. Then Bishop Sebununguri and Nshamihigo, the former acting as 'Dean of the Province' gathered a meeting of some elders, pastors and Christians in the parish of Kigeme. In open air, this so-called "assembly of members of Butare diocese"- an organ which does not exist in their constitutions decided to appoint Bishop Nshamihigo at the 'vacant seat' of Butare's diocese jointly with his own of Shyira.

⁵⁵⁹Samuel Musabyimana for Shyogwe, Norman Kayumba for Kigeme, Alex Birindabagabo for Cyangugu, and Venuste Mutiganda as Co-adjuteur in Butare.

new Province of Rwanda; Ndandari was rehabilitated and his nominees re-ordained and re-appointed⁵⁶⁰. This resolved the crisis temporarily but there were other crises to come.

In fact, the next drama opposed for the first time, the two historical partners, both unconditional allies of the Habyarimana regime, Sebununguri of Kigali diocese and Nshamihigo of Shyira diocese, now archbishop of Rwanda. During the process of creating a new diocese in Kibungo detached from that of Kigali, Sebununguri's Synod presented two candidates as requested by the Provincial Constitution, Revd A. Mvunabandi, a Gahini Secondary School director, and Revd. Karuhije⁵⁶¹, secretary to the bishop, Dean of the Kigali Cathedral. During the electoral proceedings in the Province, Sebununguri, backed by the Shyogwe's diocese bishop, S. Musabyimana, supported Revd A. Karuhije, while the Archbishop and the rest of his colleagues supported Mvunabandi.

This became an issue. Observers have remarked two elements that turned the process into an ethnic conflict. First, Sebununguri camp argued that his candidate, Karuhije, a kin to his wife, was being ejected because of his Batutsi background. Second, in Kibungo, a virtual 'Batutsi' inhabited land, Sebununguri had for a virulent opponent, Justin Mugenzi, an ethno-politician native of the region, member of his Church and president of the PL political party⁵⁶². Mugenzi made no secret of the fact that if Karuhije was selected, he would not let him go safe. It is on that timbre that the two camps, on the one hand, Sebununguri's and on the other, Nshamihigo's (Archbishop) planned secret separate ceremonies of ordination. The Archbishop's scored. Mvunabandi was ordained on 18 September 1993. But once the new bishop was appointed he found a diocese split into two factions and had to mobilise his clergy and Christians to bring about a peace settlement.⁵⁶³

There was a sense that both candidates, Karuhije and Mvunabandi were competent and good men who were used and enmeshed in a dirty and bitter feud by their superiors. Meanwhile, in South, in the former diocese of Butare now divided in four, the patriarch Bishop, Justin Ndandari, entered into rivalry with one of his young nominees, the bishop of the Shyogwe diocese, Samuel Musabyimana, for the possession of the Hanika parish near the town of Nyanza.⁵⁶⁴ The conflict had not been resolved at the time of the 1994 tragedy.

⁵⁶⁰During this reorganisation, a former assistant bishop to Ndandari, Mgr Nduhura who was relegated to a jobless position was appointed bishop of the Cyangugu dioceses. A. Birindabagabo, was appointed to Kigeme. As he was not native of the region, and having a Tutsi identity, he underwent pressure and ended in being relegated to a position of assistant bishop. He exchanged his position with his assistant, a man of the region, Norman Kayumba.

⁵⁶¹A kin to Sebununguri's family as a nephew to his wife. Actually, he was killed by the militia during the genocide.

⁵⁶²Mugenzi's party, PL was divided into two rival factions. His faction was close to the "Hutu power" base who were the extremist group responsible for the genocide.

⁵⁶³Interview with Bishop Mvunabandi, Kigali, April 5, 1997.

⁵⁶⁴Located in the administrative territory of Gitarama comprising the Shyogwe diocese, Hanika parish was maintained in the Butare diocese during the creation of four new dioceses by 'the sponsoring' bishop, Ndandari, in my view for three reasons: geographically (Hanika was nearer and easily covered by Butare); referential (unlike Shyogwe a very important historical missionary station, the Butare diocese was created ex nihilo); financially and ecumenically (Hanika was in partnership with the district of Ottweiler, Church of Reinland, Germany which constituted a source of income). The new bishop of Shyogwe, Musabyimana was granted the occupation of the parish by the intervention of the Gendarmerie in February 1994.

Another series of conflicts occurred within another Protestant Church, Association of Baptist Churches of Rwanda (AEBR). The poorly formed local pastors were opposed to the Missionaries of the Conservative Baptist Mission from Illinois (USA) on the question of managing the aid, and on other matters including the Church's leadership. Each time, the conflict resulted in a break away and the creation of a fractional Church⁵⁶⁵.

Through quarrels, jealousy, loyalty to political power or mutual accusations over greed among some of the Protestant denominations, people have perceived the most notorious offences against elementary standards of the Church and society. The absence of community discipline, of conciliation and forgiveness inside Rwandan Christian communities, has set up a distressing example to society. While remaining tough on discipline, Paul advises patience and kindness to congregations whose integrity was threatened by fractious offences resulting from cultural diversity, divergent theologies, quarrels over wages of Church leaders. He invites them to distinguish those offences, though not excusable, are subject to forgiveness, and those considered as criminal, thus grounded for expulsion from community⁵⁶⁶.

As Shriver puts it, Paul's letters offer a picture of strong-willed people struggling with definitions of moral norms, moral authority and their obligation to preserve their relations with each other. The intercongregational ethic here was a restorative justice with room for on the one hand, punishment, and on the other, forgiveness, as sober, patient virtue of people, a factor of renewal of social relationship and an ingredient for the fabric of community cohesion⁵⁶⁷.

The way leadership has been searched, exercised and understood in Rwandan Churches reveals that it was taken for being synonymous of the control of power. Viewed from a phenomenological point of view, power is considered from three angles: those who exercise it; the means employed and its extreme forms.⁵⁶⁸ The Church leaders have perceived their role not as servants of the community but as rulers. Hence, the definition which Max Weber gave to power applied with regard to its control in Rwandan Churches: "Power is the

⁵⁶⁵ According to Revd F. Bashaka, current Legal Representative, the last crisis occurred in late 1991 between the Church leaders and the missionaries. It resulted from a disagreement on the management of the financial aid from the Mission. AEBR leaders felt they were being treated like children. The missionaries were not sure that the aid would be used in accordance with their purposes.

The AEBR proposed that its 'mother-mission' mediate. There was no single response. Then they called on the Protestant Council which appointed a commission. The later made recommendations which the missionaries rejected. Instead, the later withdrew and created their own "Mission for a new Creation" led by Reverend Cheer, who at the time was senior representative of the "Mother Mission" in Rwanda (currently missionary in Pakistan). Another split took place in 1984/86, when Abel Serukato, a former leader of the Church who was paid a monthly wage of \$40 to be a 'puppet of the Missionaries', according to his rivals, tried to recuperate the leadership of the Church with the assistance of the missionaries. Revoked by the Executive committee of the Church Serukato moved two miles away and founded a fractional community, "the community of the Evangelical Churches in Rwanda". Interview, Kigali, March 1995; CPR archives.

⁵⁶⁶ Ready in particular the following passages: Mt. 18:15-17; Mt. 6. 14-15; 1 Cor.13:4; 2 Cor.12.20-21.

⁵⁶⁷ Shriver Jr,D., *An Ethic for Enemies. Forgiveness in Politics*, New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

⁵⁶⁸ Thielicke, H., op.cit. p.171.

probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests"⁵⁶⁹.

Consequently, instead of being the agencies of healing and reconciliation, the Protestant Churches developed conflicts and divisions which completely ruined the credibility of the Churches in their attempt to mediate in the political crisis. This absence of ethical, social and spiritual maturity was reinforced by a 'born-againism' in their teachings to which we now turn.

IV. 5.2.3. 'Born-again' Theology: Mariamu and Bonnke

a. Challenge from prophetess Mariamu

The prophetess Mariamu, a Zairian of Banyamurenge background, lived in Abela village, 120 km south of the Congolese (Zairian) city of Uvira, opposite Bujumbura (Burundi). Her charismatic ministry started in early 1970s and has been since then a challenge to the Rwandan Churches⁵⁷⁰. In the following paragraphs our aim is to examine the emergence of the Mariamu phenomenon and its implications on the teaching of the Churches and the ethnic issue in the Great lakes region.

Mariamu's ministry was popular among the Banyamurenge group but raised controversial reactions among other ethnic groups of the area, particularly among the Bembe and Bafulelo⁵⁷¹. The fundamentalist Churches in the sub-region, exploited her charisma in organising pilgrimages for Christians from Rwandan Churches and skilfully exploited her indirect reference to baptism by immersion and by Holy Spirit to attract members from the institutional denominations⁵⁷². According to Eca, a lawyer, native of Mariamu's village from the Bemba group, her charisma was promoted by some politicians from the region who lived in Kinshasa and at the same time opposed by politicians of the other groups⁵⁷³. During the war that followed the Banyamurenge uprisings in October 1996, Mariamu was wounded and her sons killed. She was brought to Rwanda and died in the Pentecostal Parish Church of Gitarama in December 1996.

From the ethical point of view, Mariamu's phenomenon raises a series of questions. What is the theological foundation and the place of her teachings in the proclamation of the Gospel.

⁵⁶⁹ Weber, M., *The Theory of Social and Economic organisations*, trans.A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons, New York/ Oxford, 1947, p. 132, quoted in Thielicke, op.cit. p.172.

⁵⁷⁰ Mariamu came into her prophetic ministry through illness that left her physically disabled in the lower part of her body. During the process of searching for healing the traditional healer consulted should have said that "your last chance would be in God". Illiterate and not Christian, she then started to look at how to know God. She learnt how to read the Bible on her own and then converted to Methodism.

⁵⁷¹ Ms Eugenie Mukayiranga, a former member of the Rwanda University Bible study groups spent one month in the Abela village in 1982. Giving her testimony about Mariamu's phenomenon, she said that most of Mariamu's supposed teachings would be exaggerated by her visitors back home. Eca, a lawyer from the Mariamu village said in the same meeting that her ministry was never questioned. Rather, the Church was looking at how to integrate it fully in its life. E. M. Ngenzi at Bodenseehof house, May 1995.

⁵⁷² It has been assumed that the fundamentalist Churches are those which ignore formal liturgy, but rather put an emphasis on baptism by immersion and in the Holy Spirit as well as the Speaking in tongues. This category we found, the Pentecostals, the Baptists on one extreme and in another the Seven Day Adventist Church which respects the Sabbath. Presbyterian, Anglican and Methodist were classified as historic Churches.

⁵⁷³ Eca. Witness in Bodenseehof house in May 1995.

How relevant is a gift that divides instead of edifying and respecting the centrality of Christ in the life of the Church; how could it be considered as from God? How can people be helped to test the teachings of such kind in the light of the Scriptures?

Moreover, Mariamu's case leads any historian of Christianity and politics in the Great Lakes region to reflect on the theological implications of the recent war in the Democratic Republic of Congo which was started by the Banyamurenge people. They reacted against the ethnic politics of Mobutu government. Like in Rwanda, the Banyamurenge in R.D.Congo, associated to the Batutsi, have been considered as 'invaders' aiming to create a Hamite empire in the interlacustrine region of Africa. As previously stated, Kagame has connected the Rwandan 'mythico-history' about the Barenge to the *Banyamurenge* of Zaire, the Hamites and the Batutsi. This, I have suggested, leaves the Hamite theory in the region, both an issue for social science and missiology and ethics study so as to prevent a syncretism resulting from a politico- ethnic and some form of Christian feelings. It is time now to look at another form of teaching which affected the Rwandan Protestant engagement in society.

b. Reinhard Bonnke

A German Native, Reinhard Bonnke developed his Ministry in the Africa Continent and became a specialist of 'born-again' and 'miracles' theology. He developed a style of teaching that for many, impinged considerably on a faith rooted in the realities of changing contexts⁵⁷⁴. Reinhard Bonnke came to Rwanda in June 1990 but some Rwandans knew him from having visited his meetings in Mombasa, Nairobi (Kenya), Bujumbura (Burundi), Bukavu and Goma (Zaire, both cities border with Rwanda). Bonnke's theology, in the words of Chipenda, "provides easy answers to complex problems, leaving behind turmoil and religious riots in the Churches"⁵⁷⁵.

Arriving two months before the widely advertised visit of the Pope (6-9 September 1990) at the time when the Kibeho apparitions still had repercussions and at the crucial period of reclamation for democracy, Bonnke's campaign was held up for scrutiny. On the whole, it brought a religiously confusing message. He pronounced a blessing to the regime as he did

⁵⁷⁴ Gifford, Paul., *New Dimension in African Christianity*, Nairobi: All Africa Conference of Churches, 1992). Gifford studied the role of the outsiders in initiating the theology of 'revivals and crusades' on the Africa continent. The crusade as the author experienced it during the June 1990 crusade in Kigali, and as Gifford pointed it out includes various stages:

a. His crusade, as I observed it during his visit to Rwanda, June 1990, is build upon the following line: a dramatisation during which he fixes the public to himself as an extraordinary man of God. In his preaching Bonnke claims to depends on the Bible alone to transmit the message of God, to make of the participants, evangelists like Bonnke. Human beings are totally evil and depraved, worthless, valueless. The only thing that matters is the conversion to Jesus. Bonnke attacks the 'bishop's dead church' in particular, the Catholic and other religious beliefs, Islam, Hindu whose believers would be invited to convert from 'demon's power'. Bonnke rejects en bloc the African cultural values perceived as 'satanic structures bearing witchcraft'. His teaching include speaking in tongues. But the greatest moment is the healing of sick persons. Bonnke addresses by name different diseases and promises immediate total healing. Bonnke's mission always praises the government, in particular the state president; he would qualify as unchristian any blame put on the authorities for anything that goes wrong.

⁵⁷⁵ Chipenda, J., "The Church of the Future". In Waruta (ed.). *African Churches in the 21st century. Challenges and Promises*, Nairobi: AACC, 1995, pp. 19-36.

before for many other dictatorships (Mobutu's in Zaire, Moi's in Kenya, Buyoya's in Burundi; Babangida in Nigeria, Compaore's in Burkina Faso).

He called Rwandans to enjoy the freedom of religion, to pray and support a Christian President. For many among the public present, this call was an implicit endorsement of Habyarimana's regime from the Protestant Church leaders who had been present at all the meetings. Bonnke's theology seemed to persistently legitimate a repressive dictatorial regime. It was a disappointment for Christians who were seeking a more spiritual and Christian guidance to help them engage more actively in a non-violent struggle for political changes.

However, even if the problems highlighted by Mariamu and Bonnke's theologies had been addressed by the Churches it would not have been sufficient to deal with the haemorrhage from the historical Churches and the decay in political morality. There were other causes for the exodus. For Rutayisire, both the closeness of the politicians and the Church leaders, the "Barokole heavenly influenced theology" and the 'born-again' theologies versed in personal testimonies aimed at a 'Christian babies level' teaching all became factors of indolence. They prevented Christians from being united for a common purpose of speaking out truth and denouncing the evil process, namely ethnic mobilisation⁵⁷⁶.

Conclusion

This chapter has been concerned with examining how the Churches participated in the shaping of acceptable images of the MRND regime at home and abroad. We saw that society was left divided in the 1960s between the new Bahutu rulers and the Batutsi who were discriminated against into the country or being sent into exile. The Church leaders had some possibilities of choosing between being neutral and working for reconciliation, to advocate for the repatriation and reintegration of the refugees or to cultivate loyalty to a regime that hid its discriminatory ideology behind the divination and sacralisation of the ruler and its claims of unity. The Church hierarchy chose to be loyal to the regime and in many cases offered a powerful moral support to it.

The Church's incapacity to assume ethical responsibility with regard to the principles of justice, democracy and reconciliation, had three root causes: first, the hierarchies were enrolled in the MRND system that combined the distribution of privileges and honours with the control of conscience; second, the Churches were vulnerable due, on the one hand, to the absence of theological thinking that could orient their action with regard to assessing and responding to evil in politics, and on the other hand, to the internal tensions within different denominations. Lastly, the sacralisation of power in the African dictatorships needed to be addressed as an ethical issue on a regional basis. The legitimisation of the regime as well as the absence of prophetic theology substantially affected the mediation and interventions Christians undertook in the 1990s crises as shown in the next chapter.

⁵⁷⁶Rutayisire, a., *Faith under Fire. Testimonies of Christian Bravery*, Herts: African Enterprise, 1996, p.116.

CHAPTER V: A Case Study:

ETHNIC IDEOLOGY AND MEDIA IN THE 1990'S

Introduction

The exploitation and the recurrence of ethnic feelings in the Rwandan conflict has taken on a new dimension in the 1990s with the involvement of the media. Before, during and after the genocide, some media have clearly adopted a policy of telling lies, inciting to animosity and murder. The media became the instruments of mobilisation for the genocide. Long before the tragedy, they participated in planting the culture of violence in launching a campaign of ethnic hatred in Rwanda and in the Great Lakes region of Africa. The best known was Radio-Télévision Libre de Mille collines (RTLTM), then some newspapers including Kangura⁵⁷⁷ and other titles that formed what the Paris based international organisation 'Reporter Sans Frontières' (reporters without borders) called 'les media de la haine'(the media of hatred), a title adapted by Chrétien & al, for their book Les Media du Génocide.

During the period of the massacres and the genocide, the Church leaders persistently failed to provide moral guidance, to acknowledge and condemn the genocide. An Observer of the Churches of Rwanda and Burundi, Roger Bowen said: "while extremists used the media to manipulate people, the church which " pioneered the written word have lagged behind in the use of modern electronic media".⁵⁷⁸ The London based Human rights organisation African Rights has estimated that it is not only the "nation as a whole, but the Church which stands in need of truth-telling, justice, reconciliation and penance"⁵⁷⁹. Of course, the failure had less to do with the competence of modern electronic media, although Bowen indicates that this was part of the reality. It was more to do with the blind obedience paid by the Christian leaders to the public authorities; and also, the fact that the Churches never developed any theological ethic to question the media programmes which functioned as tools for an evil political system.

For many including Chrétien's group, the social revolution of 1959 had generated an intellectual transformation which led to the emergence of a local elite who occupied positions

⁵⁷⁷ Both media Kangura News paper and RTLTM radio were dominated by 'Hutu-hard-liners', in particular from the entourage of president Habyarimana. Kangura was launched in June 1990 from Gisenyi, Habyarimana's fiefdom and RTLTM in April 1993.

⁵⁷⁸ Roger Bowen, General Secretary of Mid-African Ministry (former CMS-Rwanda-Mission. Bowen, R. C.Jones lecture. London, 1995.

⁵⁷⁹ Omaar, R, & de Waal,A, Rwanda, death, despair, defiance (2d ed.). London: African Rights, 1995, p.531. The authors mention the letter of 2 August 1994 from 29 Roman catholic priests in Goma to the Pope imputing the whole responsibility to RPF and affirming that both Hutu and Tutsi were executioners in the massacres. They also evoked the Anglican archbishop press conference in Nairobi, 4 June 1994 when he refused to condemn the militia interahamwe and the interim government's responsibility in the massacres but condemned RPF for the war it started.

in different sectors. Such change did not happen in the media apart from a few exceptions⁵⁸⁰. Consequently during the 1990's crises, the extremist media discovered their role as the enemies of human rights; they developed a culture of violence that ended in the 1994 genocide.

In the course, of the crisis some sections of the media were able to speak out the truth and to suggest responsible reporting on the activities of reconciliation. However, their message had limited impact because the Church hierarchy which had considerable access to both public and private media⁵⁸¹ failed, on the one hand, to support these balanced reports and on the other, to creatively use different channels to counteract the process of organised ethnic mobilisation.

This chapter intends to examine the contexts of the genesis, development, ownership and distribution of the media. The analysis of the media will focus on the culture of violence initiated by the 'media of hatred', its sources; its approaches and the reason why those who were involved in more responsible media reporting were not able to counteract the campaign of violence. Lastly the reflection will identify the challenges to Churches and society posed by the reporting of the 'media of hatred'.

V.1. Distribution and Ownership

The history of media in Rwanda is relatively new; it started with the written material for catechism and evangelism in early 1910s. Then in 1933 Father Coubeau of the White Fathers Missionary Society founded the first newspaper called *Kinyamateka*. The state media were created from 1960 onwards during the years of struggle for independence⁵⁸². For more than six decades, the Rwandan media has been restricted to a few newspapers and one radio station, Radio Rwanda. Television started in the 1990s. Attempts to publish daily newspapers have failed. State and Churches have been the two major owners for a long time; they were joined in the 1990s by the political parties and NGOs. But except for the radio which covered more than 87 % of the country (evaluation CPR, 1988), circulation was low. Hence there has been no media establishment which could have allowed society and its institutions to know who is who in media.

In fact, the proliferation of the media in Rwanda started with the political and economic speculation of the 1990's. Till then few independent newspapers existed. There was the weekly Catholic *Kinyamateka*; the Roman Catholic monthly for children, *Hobe*, founded in 1954 by Bishop Bigirumwami; *Dialogue* in French founded in 1970 by Father Massion and *Umunyamuryango wa TRAFIPRO* and some occasional papers of Churches, dioceses, states and private companies. The essential components of the media, e.g. the press, audio-visual,

⁵⁸⁰ These include the in *Kinyamateka* (the weekly Roman Catholic launched in 1933), the *Umunyamuryango wa Trafipro* (which disappeared).

⁵⁸¹ Church broadcast on the national radio station week programmes and Sunday services ; in addition they were owners of news papers and some were even about to set up their own radio stations.

Radio- television, films, photography were all under state control. From 1973, the government was exerted through the Office of Information (ORINFOR) which managed Radio Rwanda, Rwanda television, Imvaho and la Relève and a daily bulletin with a lower distribution. At the end of the 1980s and beginning of 1990s, several newspapers were created and many demands sent to the government for the launching of independent radios⁵⁸³. During the 1990s, the political panorama had developed into four major groupings which were reflected in the distribution of the media: the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF); the MRND-CDR camp; the moderate Opposition camp and the 'Hutu- Power camp'. T. Nsengiyaremye has suggested that the 1990's Rwandan media grouped on the basis of the financial and political manipulator.⁵⁸⁴ In addition to this classification, there were some other organs including Kinyamateka which belonged to the Catholic Church, Imbaga of the co-operative movement, Dialogue which belonged to individuals and Christian associations. Unlike the Catholics, the Protestants had no newspaper since the disappearance in 1974 of Inkoramutima. The attempt made by the CPR service of Communication to revitalise it in late 1980s failed. With regard to radio, both Catholics and Protestants had wide access to Radio Rwanda. For a long time, the Catholics enjoyed all free of charge access to broadcast the Sunday service and different programmes during week days on the state owned Radio Rwanda. The Protestants joined in 1979 following heavy talks with the Rwandan government.

The use of the Radio by the CPR Service of Communication (SECOM) thus started in 1979⁵⁸⁵. In fact, a tiny mission, the C.M.M.L (Christian Mission in Many Lands) had at its disposal very modest technical facilities. It retained an absolute monopoly over Protestant broadcast known as Inkuru Nziza for 17 years (1962-1979).

Following a survey done in 1977 after the nationalisation of R.V.O.G (Radio Voice of the Gospel) in Addis Ababa and Cordac in Bujumbura, a delegation of two, Dr Jayawira and Pastor Marc Chambron persuaded both the WACC and the LWF to back the CPR in information- communication. Then, the CPR tried but failed to obtain an authorisation from the Rwandan government to install the technical equipment from Radio Cordac. Then the CPR set up a commission on communication. It sent for training a producer who was later appointed to the full-time staff. From the first of December 1979, CPR was taking over from

⁵⁸² Logiest, G., 1988.

⁵⁸³ A list of 80 titles mostly created between 1990 and 1994. Chrétien & Al., Les Médias du Génocide, Paris: Karthala, 1995, pp.383-386. See also Reporters sans Frontières, Rapport de Mission, 16 au 24 Septembre 1994, Paris, 1994, pp.9-19.

⁵⁸⁴ See Dialogue, no 175 Avril-Mai 1994, pp.59-70. For instance, *Rwanda Rw'ezo*, *Kanguka*, *Le Flambeau*, *L'Ere de Liberté*, *Le tribun du Peuple...* belonged to the RPF camp; *Rwanda Rushya* of A. Kameya to PL-Lando, a pro-RPF tendency; *Interahamwe*, *Kamarampaka*, *Médaille Nyiramacibiri* and *RTL Radio* belonged to the MRND; *Kangura* of Ngeze Hassan to CDR; *Isibo* of S. Musangamfura to the moderate MDR of Twagiramungu tendency; *Le Soleil* to the Parti Socialiste; *Vérités d'Afrique-Impamo* of and *Umurangi* belonged to "MDR -Power".

the C.M.M.L to produce the Protestant programs broadcast on Radio Rwanda. At the time of the 1994 tragedy religious programmes on Radio Rwanda covered 200 minutes per week. Out of these, the Roman Catholic Church had 80 minutes; the Protestant Churches, members of the CPR had 70 minutes; other Protestants had 40 minutes and Islam 10 minutes⁵⁸⁶.

Despite this substantial radio-broadcasting time, some people still think the Churches have not succeeded in communicating with society, in particular with Christians. The President of CPR, Rev. Hitimana see a technical problem. Firstly, the Sunday service is scheduled at the hours people meet in the Churches, and in the case of an energising message, no one would listen to it as the secular world is not interested. Secondly, programmes during the week lack coherence and focus⁵⁸⁷.

Various initiatives have been taken including a Sunday consecrated to the service of information. Donations were collected for the office of communication of the CPR, at the same time a network of prayer for that service was initiated. Unquestionably, coming from a certain sociological marginalisation, the service of Communication permitted the CPR to gradually "became fair, mature, without complex, partner for local and continental ecumenism: our presence on national radio has allowed us to get out of a ghetto in which we had been confined by missionary and political history", CPR leaders told Paul Eberhard⁵⁸⁸.

I have raised the question with the former head of the Communication Department in the CPR (now head of Africa and Middle East regions in WACC, London) of how these opportunities were used to mobilise energies on national and ecumenical levels to resist the evil in Rwanda. For Julienne N. Munyaneza, the CPR Communication benefited churches, because "the Church leaders made their voices heard!" The service created a context of religious messages throughout the country in which laypersons, women and youth

⁵⁸⁵ Eberhard, P., *Evaluation Report of Rwanda project*, Kigali: CPR, service of communication, 1988.

⁵⁸⁶ **Exhibit of religious program schedule broadcast by ORINFOR (1994)**

Day	denomination	time	duration	language
Monday	CPR	17.20	10 min	Kinyarwanda
Tuesday	Pentecost	17.20	10 min	Kinyarwanda
Wednesday	Adventists	17.20	10 min	Idem
Thursday	Islam	15.00	10 min	Kinyarwanda
Friday	CPR	17.20	10 min	idem
	Pentecost	21.20	10 min	French
Saturday	Adventists	17.20	10 min	Kinyarwanda
	CPR	21.10	10 min	French
Sunday	CPR	10.00	40 min	Kinyarwanda
	Catholics	11.00	1 hour	Kinyarwanda
	Catholics	17.20	10 min	idem
	Catholics	21.20	10 min	French

Total: 200 minutes per week.

Comment : Both catholic and Protestant had substantial radio broadcasting time: more that three hours per week. The Sundays services were listened to by a large majority of the population. The religious celebrations (Easter, Christmas, Ramadan...) were broadcast in full broadcast as were any religious events attended by the head of state.

⁵⁸⁷ Hitimana, N., *Interview*, Butare, March 1977.

⁵⁸⁸ CPR, *Evaluation report 1988*. According to J. Nyirankusi the schedule was maintained up to January 1994 when she left the office to join the WACC, London.

participated. Julianne said that during the 1990 crises, most of the programs produced focused on love, reconciliation, forgiveness and apparently had some impact considering Christians died trying to save others during the genocide.

However, we must underline two problems arising out of this interview: first, the absence of trained journalists to connect theological ethics to issues of social responsibility for the Churches and to monitor the crisis and help Church leaders to formulate a clear message. From credible source, we have learnt that the staff attached to the Communication Service were reluctant to penetrate the socio-political contexts and to enlighten the Church leaders with accurate information.

In the second instance, there was still a heavy state control. The week-day programs were recorded two days before and handed to the Government Office of Information (ORINFOR under the direct control of the President). The Sunday service was broadcast live from the Kigali Episcopal diocese cathedral⁵⁸⁹. The list of preachers was drawn up by the CPR Communication service but the local bishop, a fervent defender of the regime, was keen to withdraw from the list any preacher who did not fit his criteria. Some like Israel Havugimana (Anglican laypreacher mentioned in memorial above) who were critical of the regime were considered unsuitable. A subsequent problem not mentioned was the anti-ecumenical stance adopted by the local bishop, which created a lot of disputes affecting the Protestant credibility: the bishop preserved a purist ancient form of Anglican liturgy unfamiliar to other Protestants. Equally, the week-day programmes elaborated by the CPR included biblical messages, Christian testimonies, songs, dialogue, interviews and education, in a conservative pietist form that reinforced the tradition of the C.M.M.L 'born-again' theology.

V.2. The Problems of the Rwandan Media

Having discussed the problems regarding the ownership of the media we now consider some of the issues regarding the way the media operated. Professionally, there was no code of ethics nor a legislation up to May 1991. This led to unprofessional practices and low standards among journalists. Some became opportunists, served the interests of those who paid them the most money. But let's look more closely at how journalists and those involved in the media were compromised by their relationship with the political parties.

V.2. 1. State Control

The extremist media which proliferated in the 1990s can not be separated from the changes that took place in Rwanda in 1973. The military putsch further deteriorated the already difficult relations between the northern Abakiga people and the southern Abanyanduga, a polarisation that developed earlier during the imposition of Batutsi rulers described in chapter II and III. The ideology developed by the regime which came into power during the

⁵⁸⁹ Later, the Service could be alternatively broadcast from the temple of the Presbyterian Church in Kigali.

coup of 1973 was hostile to the Batutsi and Bahutu who lived in the south and centre. This regime utilised the media as part of its strategy to control people's conscience.⁵⁹⁰

When Habyarimana came into power he suppressed the Ministry of Information and created the 'Office of Information' (ORINFOR) integrating it into his Office. The mandate reiterated was that media and journalists were the "transmitters of the orders from the rulers to the ruled" ("les journalistes sont des courrois de transmission entre les dirigeants et les dirigés"). The Office covered both public and private media. Hence, the media were hemmed in by the restrictions placed on them, summarised in the phrase *Humiriza Nkuyobore* (close your eyes so that I govern you) process. The consequence of this was to reduce the small minority of learned Rwandan to a state of "functional illiteracy" by the political overlords. The sole publications available were under government or Church control. These two institutions as said in chapters three and four defended the same ideology and with the exception of a few incidents, they avoided annoying each other. The media lacked the necessary resources to investigate and bring the truth into the daylight. Adding to the misfortune, without professional publishing activity, book production was almost nil.

The director of ORINFOR named by the President was destined always to be a man devoted to the ideology of the regime. His competence covered both public and private media sectors. The last person who occupied the position during the last years of the monolithic regime was F. Nahimana, a young lecturer in History. He had presented a thesis "Les Royaumes Hutus du Rwanda pré-colonial", in 1986 in the University of Paris VI and proved to be committed to promoting the image of Habyarimana than the media. For instance, in later 1980s he pioneered for the formulation of a philosophy of the regime of Habyarimana which he called 'Umuganda'⁵⁹¹ in reference to Habyarimana's policy of manual activities obligatory to each Rwandan at least once per week.

V.2.2. Absence of Policies and Legislation

The second problem has been the government's failure to set up cultural policies. As a consequence, there was no framework for the formation of journalists, nor any legislation or code of ethics that would promote a responsible journalism. There was no single training institution in journalism or communication.

It was into this chaotic context that several newspapers were born at the end of the 1980s. This created the third category of problems. Some of the newspapers were started by individuals, political parties or NGOs and also by the barons of the regime as a counterattack in an attempt to cover up their political errors and criminal records. In the end, there were two media groupings, one pro-regime with their associations and another made of

⁵⁹⁰ Actually, there was one radio station-Radio Rwanda, the Ciné-photo service which did not produce any single film; two weekly News papers, *Imvaho* and *La Relève*, respectively in Kinyarwanda and French; it was later added a daily bulletin in French.

⁵⁹¹ Leading figure in the extremist propaganda, Nahimana was sacked in April 1992 by the coalition government led by Prime Minister D. Nsengiyaremye from the opposition for his role in spreading the massacres in the Bugesera region in March 1992. Nahimana then was engaged in the creation of the RTLM.

independent operators who cherished the moderate political parties and the NGOs's support. The rivalry between the two media groupings developed. On the one hand, those supporting the Habyarimana regime were openly anti-Tutsi claiming to be pro-Army forces and pro-Interahamwe; but they were accused by the other camp of being anti-democratic. On the other hand, the pro-RPF, many of them pro-democratic opposition would be constantly accused by the regime of 'working for the enemy'. This was confusing in the mind of the population who till then had believed that the message of the media came from the authorities.

V.2. 3. 'Puppet' Journalism

Among the major challenges was the fact that journalists had become propagandists of their political parties, then according to Higiro, took orders from their political sponsors rather than from the professional hierarchies. Hence they openly abused the very basic principles of journalism: objectivity, exactitude, truth telling and balanced presentation of information. Many among those newspapers apart from Kinyamateka, Imvaho, la Relève, Imbaga, Dialogue and Isibo had no known regular frequency. They were published in the wake of a major event or when a personality proposed to finance one or several issues, mostly to attack their rivals⁵⁹².

The occasional intervention from different foundations and embassies which organised conferences and workshops from 1985 (a German Foundation: Friederich Neumann as well as the USA, Belgian and Swiss Embassies) was not enough to resolve the problem. From our research, we have had evidence that inexperienced people, including the jobless or employees sacked for absence of discipline from different administrations joined the ranks of the media to earn money. They little cared for the principles of the profession. This category of 'journalists' became easy targets for the tycoons and merchants of racist propaganda. T.Nsengiyaremye, accurately grouped the Rwandan media into three major poles: those working as tools of 'political propaganda'; those motivated by the financial interests and the non lucrative category. Rightly he pointed out that there were fewer non lucrative and no political motivated newspapers, including Kinyamateka , Imbaga, Dialogue. Coming into journalism with a pecuniary motivation, Al Hester lamented, led to many among the media and journalists overturning the duty of integrity and truth for money.⁵⁹³

V.3. Promoting the Culture of Violence

Kangura Newspaper and RTLM Radio were created by the tycoons of racist propaganda to fulfil common functions. Firstly, in that new era wave of democratic reclamation they worked

⁵⁹² In two papers presented in the conference on "Objectivité et honnêteté dans l'information politique", Kigali 25-28 mars 1994, Thaddee Nsengiyaremye, director of Ikindi newspaper, Kigali, "Intérêts financiers, Honnêteté et Objectivité dans l'Information politique" and Rubbens , Agence Belga, Brussels, "Objectivité de l'Information et Pressions foncières". *Dialogue* no 175 April-May 1994.

⁵⁹³ Nsengiyaremye, suggested that the first and the second categories of media were the tools of political propaganda and avoided to refer to 'ethnic ideology'. He mentioned his journal 'Ikindi', 'Le partisan' of A.Sibo, 'Ijambo' of Hangimana, 'Le messenger-Intumwa' of E. Mutsinzi and 'La voix des Grands Lacs' de Kajibwami Ndjovu as motivated by financial interests. Kinyamateka, Dialogue, Imbaga qualified rightly as no lucrative. Nsengiyaremye, *op.cit.* p.63

as tools of the groups on power to obstruct the democratic process. Secondly, they were set up to sabotage the peace negotiations process with the rebellion, the RPF camp perceived as monarchists and nostalgic of the 'Batutsi domination'. The following section underscores the link which existed between the most notorious of these media groups. There will also be examined the extremist circles that created them; their functions and the tools they utilised to sow and spread the seeds of the horrific genocide.

V.3. 1. Kangura and RTLM: Cartels of Extremists

The constitutive act of RTLM, was signed on 8 April 1993 by a cartel of 50 shareholders who invested a hundred million Rwanda francs (one million US dollars). The declared objectives were to collect, treat and publish information; educate and inform the population by the 'news', the advertising, the debates; to contribute to the reinforcement of the pluralistic democracy and the republican institutions; to organise polls and promote the business and the industry of media⁵⁹⁴.

Yet, the major objective was to promote the ideology of a discredited regime. The relationship with the *akazu* of the *Habyarimana* and the *MRNRD/CDR* extremists was evident. Among the shareholders beside F. Kabuga, a millionaire businessman whose daughter has married one of the sons of President Habyarimana and F. Nahimana, a lecturer of history at the National University who offered to become the Goebbels of the regime, were members of the board of the *Interahamwe* and other influential Ministers from the *MRND*⁵⁹⁵ political party. From its early beginnings, the RTLM stood as a tool of the death squads, the militia and other groups which were involved in most of the massacres.

The members of an international commission invited by the home based human rights organisations (CLADHO) to an inquiry on the violation of human rights in Rwanda for the period between October 1990 to January 1993⁵⁹⁶ outlined the role of the President and his entourage in planning acts of violence and sabotage of the peace process.

The two media, Kangura and RTLM were media of the private sector. At the end of August 1993 only around 17 millions of shareholders were paid in the bank accounts of RTLM in Kigali⁵⁹⁷. Obviously this sum was not enough to finance the preliminary elaboration of the

⁵⁹⁴ Reporter sans frontières. *Rapport de mission*. Paris: 1994

⁵⁹⁵ Among the 50 members were members of cabinet: Dr Augustin Ndirabatware, Minister of Plans (son-in law of the businessman, Felecia Kabuga, chairman of RTLM); André Ntagerura (dean of the Cabinet), Minister of Transports and Communications; Alphonse Ntirivamunda, Director General of Public Works and Energy and son-in law of president Habyarimana). There were board members of CDR, like J.B. Barayagwiza; businessmen like Felecia Kabuga whose daughter espoused the son of President Habyarimana; Several MRND central committee members like Jean Habyarimana; bankers (Pasteur Musabe, brother of colonel Bagosora, the supposed brain of the genocide); intellectuals (F. Nahimana); cadres or practitioners of journalism (J.B. Bamwanga; E. Ndirwanabagabo; J.M.V Mvurirwenande; R. Simba; J. Serugendo). See Reporters sans frontieres, Sept.1994.

⁵⁹⁶ The Commission was invited by the Association of the Rwandese human rights organisations. The members of the Commission included the Paris based *International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH)*, the New York / Washington and London based, *Africa Watch*, The Ouagadougou based *Inter-African Union of Human Rights and peoples UIDH*, the Montreal based *Centre International of Human Rights and of Persons et Democratic Development (CIDPDD/IDHRDD)* affirmed. The response from the government did not deny the existence of the squad and death groups, but commented on the participation of the president.

⁵⁹⁷ Mahoux & Verhofstadt., *Rapport de la Commission Parlementaire Belge Concernant les événements du Rwanda*, Bruxelles, Décembre 1997, pp. 317-322.

project as well as to purchase the technical equipment and to run the activities of a radio station. In fact, the finances came from another source. According to the Belgian Parliamentary Commission's report on the tragic events of Rwanda, RTLM has been financed by the International Christian Democrat (ICD), through its networks of partners, particularly the German 'Konrad Adenauer Foundation'. Actually this organisation has been the generous supporter of the MRND as well as the larger giver to ICD. According to Christian Terras, editor of the Magazine *Golias*, F. Nahimana, the promoter of the RTLD was introduced to Konrad Adenauer by Prof. Molte, and M. Pristol (ndlr: two very influential figures in German Politics with regard to Rwanda). It was with Konrad Adenauer that RTLM transmitters were bought from the firm Van Rompaey, in Belgium⁵⁹⁸.

V.3. 2. The functions of the Racist Propaganda

RTLM radio was created to complement a network of extremist print media including the Kangura newspaper. Obviously, Kangura and RTLM fulfilled a number of common functions such as to picture the RPF- *Inkotanyi* the *Batutsi* and *Bahutu ibyitso* (the accomplices) inside Rwanda and abroad as a clique of monarchists bloodthirsty for power, with the intention of reinstating old-fashioned institutions. They sought to present Habyarimana as the sole asset for the 'miracle' (development) of Rwanda which would guarantee the survival of the Bahutu; consequently, they would discredit the Arusha Peace talks described as a plot against him. They also would appeal to the deep feelings of the Bahutu in attributing the RPF-Inkotanyi's rebellious activities to the whole Batutsi group. In so doing they watered down resistance to the process of ethnocide.

V.3.2.1. Promoting an Anti-Batutsi Culture

The impact created by the hard-liners in selling their idea of hatred through the media, in particular, the RTLM and Kangura newspaper resulted in a number of factors. First, the determination of the regime to resist democratic changes. Secondly, moral forces failed to address such a campaign by not challenging various groups to work for social harmony. Thirdly, the programmes had opted, deliberately or by necessity, for the use of a populist approach to channel their hatred against the Batutsi.

The populist approach attracted a very large audience among young people. Using the exciting music of Zairian artists, Congolese, Camerounian and Caribbean, they also deliberately broadcast set pieces laced with lies delivered in very simplistic ways, laughter, jokes, 'personal witnesses', 'hot reporting' (*inkuru ishushe*) and so forth. These included things like invented attacks of *Inyenzi* in the *Butare*, or *Kigali cities*, arms cache, supposed misconduct of the Prime Minister, Mrs Uwiringiyimana, and moderate members of her Cabinet. In such programmes the sources were never mentioned. Rather, an impersonal form 'on' or 'one' occurred extensively as in the following article of Ngeze Hassan telling of supposed riots and attacks of 'inyenzi' in Kigali and Butare in early February 1994.

⁵⁹⁸ Mahoux & Verhofstadt., Ibid. p. 322.

On dit que les cafards (Inyenzi) s'étaient préparés pour attaquer la ville de Kigali le 1er mars 1994. Cette attaque a été empêchée par ce qui se passe à Butare, où il faut savoir qu'il y a 52 inkotanyi partis du CND qui s'efforcent de collaborer avec les jeunes du PSD⁵⁹⁹ pour provoquer une émeute dans la ville de Butare. Nous avons d'autres indices que bientôt il y aura d'autres attaques du FPR qui vont être lancées de tous côtés à Kigali. Là on voudrait dire qu'à Biryogo, dans beaucoup de familles sont actuellement hébergés des cafards qui sont revenus du front. Nous demandons à ceux qui sont concernés par ce problème de rester tous vigilants. Nous ne périrons pas à petit feu. Là où sont maintenant les cafards, on le sait. S'ils nous cherchent, qu'ils fassent attention⁶⁰⁰.

To explain why a previous 'reporting', actually a lie did not happen, Kangura must find another fabricated story incriminating the same "Inyenzi" and allies: "cette attaque a été empêchée par ce qui se passe à Butare où 52 Inkotanyi ("équivalent of inyenzi") collaborent avec les jeunes PSD (an opposition political party youth). This supposed attack in the Butare, the second largest city of the country in the south, known both for being the stronghold of the opposition to Habyarimana, and to have high intensity of mixture of the populations was apparently made to sow the doubt and to break the very reputable true solidarity among the populations. This was part of the resistance of the dictatorship to the aspiration to democracy described in chapter six, section three.

The language was identical in both the Kangura newspaper and on the RTLM radio: "Who is the enemy of the Majority; of the Republican institutions? Majority, you are going to be subjugated again! Some Bahutu have become subjects of the 'cockroaches' through Batutsi women, the political parties, or human rights organisations, and media. You will wake up too late when they would have put you where you ought to put them". This seems to have been the regime's constant message from the beginning of the war in October 1990.⁶⁰¹

Two other popular tools were utilised, songs and cartoons. Many singers known for being apologists of the regime were called on, among them Bikindi, a drama group's creator. Two particular songs of Bikindi were played repeatedly on RTLM, *Nanga Abahutu* (I hate the Bahutu) and *Benesebahinzi* (sons of labourers). The first denounced the betrayal of the moderates Bahutu while the second appealed to the ascriptions and stereotypes of the past emphasising domination and subjugation "planned by the Batutsi".

More cynically, caricatures and cartoons were used extensively in the extremist newspaper to portray the return of the monarchists assisted by their Bahutu accomplices⁶⁰²; they would try to prove that the RPF, the Batutsi and 'their Karinga drum' were bloodthirsty for power; they would present images of mutilated Bahutu whose flesh and blood were being consumed by their Batutsi executioners. Lastly, the caricatures and cartoons on many occasions appealed

⁵⁹⁹ CND: Conseil National pour le Développement (name of the Rwandan parliament under Habyarimana). The 600 members of the RPF battalion and some of the officials of the movement arrived in Kigali, December 1993 were accommodated there. Abakombozi: the social democrat party youth, essentially based in the south.

⁶⁰⁰ Ngeze Hassan, 'Igitero simusiga'. In Kangura no 57, February 1994, II, p.4.

⁶⁰¹ In a declaration by the minister of Foreign affairs to international opinion it is said:

"le Rwanda a fait l'objet d'une agression extérieure par les assaillants comprenant des réfugiés rwandais appartenant à l'organisation, RPF-Inkotanyi, terroriste qui n'a d'autres visées que l'instauration d'un régime minoritaire, incarnant un féodalisme à visage moderne. Le peuple rwandais n'acceptera pas une marche arrière de l'histoire, ramenant les forces vives de la nation": Rwanda has been attacked by a minority group of monarchists. The people of Rwanda will not accept a reversal of the history. Communauté Rwandaise de France, Mémoire sur la Crise Politique Actuelle au Rwanda, Paris, 1990, p.13.

⁶⁰² Chrétien. & al., op.cit. p.144.

to the religious feelings of their audience, showing that the religious and generous hearted Habyarimana, has been betrayed and would be killed by his protégés; that the Kibeho visionaries had predicted the bloody events⁶⁰³.

These already had their political organisations, the MRND and the CDR; they reinforced them with two major loudspeakers: the militia Interahamwe " which were the right armed hand of the MRND and at the same time were engaged in cultural activities; and the RTLM radio which was created by the MRND and CDR parties but became an organ of the 'Hutu-Power' ideology of the extremists from various political parties. The leaders of these institutions would daily brain-storm together to elaborate the themes for false and biased messages in which the 'enemy' was bombarded systematically through the Kangura newspaper and RTLM radio. These media were an instrument to ensure Habyarimana's monopoly of power and to counteract the attacks of Radio Muhabura, the organ of the RPF and occasionally Radio-Rwanda⁶⁰⁴.

In fact, the campaigners appealed to a process in which broadcasting and relaying images of blood shed events and carnage was central. In Kangura no 53, December 1993, p.3. Ngeze Hassan announced the death of Habyarimana for March 1994 (he died on 6 April 1994); the President would be assassinated not by a "Tutsi but by a Hutu paid by the Tutsi". The fate of the Bahutu betrayers, it must be remembered, was equal to that of the Batutsi. Hence the ironic question of Kangura in its issue of February 1994: "the fate of Batutsi is known, what about their Bahutu accomplices"?

It is clear here that this destructive culture of violence created an ethno-graphy of Rwandan human beings with, on the one hand, the good, generous but naïve Bahutu victims of the Batutsi manipulation and predictions, and on the other the Batutsi, full of bad intention, planning the violent elimination of the Bahutu. The culture had two other essential functions: resisting democratisation and opposing power sharing.

V.3.2. 2. Resisting Democratisation

To understand the negative role played by Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) and all the print media which belonged to the extremist factions⁶⁰⁵, one has to examine the political evolution of Africa in 1990s. Following the end of the cold war, many of the African dictatorships marked by a failure in the management of the institutions were submitted to intense internal and external pressure. Some of them accepted political changes but at the same time took away with one hand what they were offering with the other. The 'National Conference', one of the innovations in the attempt to force the dictators to share power, was organised with more or less favourable results in Benin, Gabon, in the two

⁶⁰³ Chrétien.& al., pp.160; 263; RTL programme of 20 May 1994.

⁶⁰⁴ From April 1992 to April 1993, Radio Rwanda which had the monopoly in broadcasting was under the tutorship of a Minister from the opposition to Habyarimana, in what was known as the coalition government of five major political parties including the MRND but without the RPF. This period was considered by the hard-liners of the regime as the control of the enemy over national media.

⁶⁰⁵ Kangura, Umurwanashyaka, Intera, Impanda, Médaille Nyiramacibiri, Umurava, Kamarampaka.

Congo, Niger, Chad, Zaire⁶⁰⁶. The experience raised a great amount of hope within civil society in the rest of the countries of Africa. A significant number of party politics, syndicates, human rights organisations, independent media developed in Rwanda from the end of 1980s. They started to monitor human rights abuse and to question the silence of the established institutions including the churches.

However, despite the impetus flowing from the stream of these political changes, many observers, at least in Rwanda, predicted that three dictatorships would be difficult to eradicate: Mobutu's in Zaire, Eyadema's in Togo and Habyarimana's in Rwanda. These were built on the model of the former north-Korean Kim-Il-Sung⁶⁰⁷ highly orientated towards the cult of a personality, corruption of the political surrogates, ideological and divisive propaganda, brain washing, the network of secret police and last but not least the determination to kill any potential opponent.

V.3.2.3. Opposing Power Sharing

The new constitution of the 10 June 1991⁶⁰⁸ opened the country to multi-party politics and a multi-party government committed to negotiating a peace accord with the RPF. A new political vision of sharing power was written into the Arusha Peace Agreement of the 4 August 1993 which ended the three year war between the RPF and the Rwandan army⁶⁰⁹. It was considered by many as the beginning of a process of reconciliation among Rwandans. But the extremists saw it the other way round: a "putsch against Habyarimana and republican institutions". They then invented the mechanisms of resistance including racist propaganda through media, e.g. *Kangura*, and RTL. Parallel to the media campaign, they created the CDR (Coalition for the Defence of the Republic),⁶¹⁰ an extremist political party which became the ally of the MRND⁶¹¹ (*Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement*), the former ruling party.

The main targets of this agenda of violence were in the first instance, the key figures due to implement the Arusha Peace Agreement. These were accused of betraying the Bahutu cause,

⁶⁰⁶ Gatwa, Th., "Ethnic conflict and the media: the case of Rwanda". In *Media development*, London: WACC, 3/1995. Vol XLII pp 18-20. On the role of the Churches in the recent political changes in Africa, in particular during the National Conference see Bulanga, E., *Les conférences nationales en Afrique, Une affaire à suivre*, Paris: Karhala, 1993.

⁶⁰⁷ The propagandists of the ruling party were trained in North Korea whilst most of the symbols of the party were produced there, for example the effigy of Habyarimana called the medal of the party.

⁶⁰⁸ Cf. chapter 3.4.3.

⁶⁰⁹ The Arusha Peace Accord signed on the 4 August 1993 between the Government of Rwanda and the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) to end the four years war, was a collection of six different protocols negotiated at various steps:

- the Protocol of the cease-fire of the 29 March 1991 renewed on the 12 July 1992; the Protocol on a state of rights of the 18 August 1992; the Protocol on sharing power of the 30 September 1992 and 9 January 1993; the Protocol on the repatriation of refugees of the 9 June 1993; the Protocol on the fusion of two armies of the 3 August 1993 and the Protocol on diverse questions of the same date. République Rwandaise. *Journal Officiel*. Année 32, Vol. 16, 15 août 1993.

⁶¹⁰ Coalition for the Defence of the Republic

⁶¹¹ Mouvement Révolutionnaire National Pour le Développement.

of organising a putsch against the republican and democratic institutions⁶¹², and were represented as usurpers or accomplices in attempting to remove power from President Habyarimana. In a programme broadcast on the 14 February 1994 and called "La paix d'Arusha n'existe pas", RTLM rejected totally the Arusha Agreement and the team chosen for its implementation.

...Nos politiciens, surtout ceux qui ont intérêt à ce que le peuple accepte sans broncher cet acte antidémocratique et consacrent le pouvoir de certains obtenu par la force ou les magouilles, nos politiciens donc, nous demandent d'attendre les institutions de la transition et la paix d'Arusha Mensonge, triple mensonge. Peut-on penser que le premier ministre désigné qui ne sait toujours pas obtenir des partis la mise sur pied des institutions de la transition saura diriger le gouvernement... ? Au lieu de se situer en retrait du jeu politique ... il s'est volontairement placé l'étiquette de suppôt du FPR et négocié la mise en place de son gouvernement en étroite concertation avec ce FPR. Ainsi, le Général Dallaire (commandant des forces de l'ONU) déguisé en inspecteur pompon, donne ses instructions à une troupe d'otaries qui applaudissent mais font exactement le contraire. Tel semble être la MINUAR. On dirait une troupe de pingouins et d'otaries qui désobéissent à leur dompteur, plutôt qu'un groupe de militaires chargés de rétablir l'ordre et la sécurité, Surréalisme donc. Surréalisme relève du jeu des gendarmes et des voleurs. Car c'est bien ainsi qu'il faut qualifier les Major Kagame, Lizinde, Bizimungu, Kajeguhakwa,... bref des voleurs, bandits, escrocs déguisés en défenseurs de la veuve et de l'orphelin qui vont jour les gendarmes⁶¹³.

Early in 1993, with the ultimate step toward the signing of the protocol concerning the power sharing fast approaching, it became clear that *Habyarimana* would no longer have a monopoly on power including control of the army forces. Moreover, the Arusha Agreement included clauses that would allow the new government to bring to trial those members of the administration and the army who would be found guilty of human rights abuse⁶¹⁴. These clauses of the protocols have been exploited by the MRND leaders and militants to create a climate of suspicion between, on the one hand, the agents of the administration and the army forces members who might be targeted in these clean up of the administration in the forthcoming government, and on the other, the negotiators of the Peace Agreement⁶¹⁵. They would accuse them of having planned the reduction of the army and offered the country to the 'enemies'.

⁶¹² The list of enemies of the 'Hutu people' to be killed were primarily Prime Minister, Mrs Agathe Uwiringiyimana, Mr. Twagiramungu designated as Prime Minister in the Arusha Accord, the Tutsi, the moderate political, social and religious forces ; some of the UN peace corps force, particularly the Belgians, and their commandant, the Canadian General, *Romeo Dallaire*

⁶¹³ RTLM. Programme broadcast 14 February 1994. The reference to the police as defenders of widow, orphans had for background the fact that in the Arusha Protocol on power sharing the command of the police was attributed to RPF seconded by an officer from the former Rwanda police force. The reverse would happen in the command of the army. Collection Bartel, B., *Ma Foi en Crise*, Saarbrücken, 1994.

⁶¹⁴ Ibid., "Protocole sur l'Intégration des Forces Armées des Deux Parties", articles 147-163, in particular articles 147 (number of figures maintained: 19000), article 149 (the process starts with the publication of the lists of demobilised men), pp.1419-1423. Article 46 says that:

De façon urgente et prioritaire, le Gouvernement de Transition a Base Elargie écartera de l'administration territoriale les éléments incompétents ainsi que les autorités qui ont trempé dans les troubles sociaux ou dont les actions constituent un obstacle au processus démocratique et à la réconciliation nationale.⁶¹⁴

This article had its equivalent in the protocols regarding the Army. A demobilisation of soldiers apart from the 19000 soldiers required for the new army from both sides were to return to civil life. Several thousand people were concerned because during the war, a massive recruitment was organised on both sides

⁶¹⁵ In fact the governmental delegation was led by the Foreign Affairs Minister, the late Boniface Ngurinzira, who was member of the opposition party, the MDR, one of the five political parties which made what was known as the Coalition Cabinet dominated by the MRND. The protagonist in the negotiations was the RPF, the rebellion whose delegation was led by the present-day president, Pasteur Bizimungu, at the time Commissioner to Information and Propaganda of the RPF.

The accord was characterised as lies and the pursuit of the peace process as a surrealism. The programme was full of anti-professional practices like personal insults and attacks. The absence of a code of practice in Journalism had left a vacuum for such things to happen, but it is not certain that, even if the code existed, it would be respected. The convention signed both by the RTLM chairman and the Minister of Information forbade incitement to "ethnic hatred and violence", but the Minister was the first to complain about his incapacity to stop the violation of the convention and even became one of the first victims of the genocide campaign on 7th April, 1994⁶¹⁶.

In a programme broadcast on March 10 1994 the attack of RTLM on the Peace Agreement was much clearer. The radio appealed to the solidarity of the population to turn their back on the Peace Agreement and to prepare for war.

Le peuple doit le savoir et les résidents étrangers le comprendre. Fini de se servir des arguments factices des accords d'Arusha pour masquer une réalité aveuglante... Vous tous habitants du Rwanda tournez la page d'Arusha car elle est terminée... Une nouvelle page de l'histoire du Rwanda débute, à nous de l'écrire ensemble mais le titre n'est plus Arusha... Arusha est mort et enterré; même si la MINUAR pour préserver sa position privilégiée s'y accroche. Il n'y a pas d'accord de paix d'Arusha car il n'y a pas de paix d'Arusha. Retenons cette maxime: "civis pacem par Bellum" (qui veut la paix prépare la guerre). Ouvrons les yeux préparons-nous. Rien ne nous empêchera d'espérer la paix, mais pas comme des moutons que l'on égorge sur l'autel du dieu FPR. Le sang de Melchior Ndadaye n'est pas encore froid. Son sang répandu pour la démocratie de tout un peuple aura-t-il coulé en vain? De combien de victimes l'holocauste du F.P.R se repaîtra-t-elle pour ses mwamis sanguinaires⁶¹⁷?

A double invitation was made to the population in this programme, firstly, to turn their back on the Peace Agreement, secondly to prepare for war: "qui veut la paix prépare la guerre". The Burundi crisis - October 1993 coup attempt during which the newly elected President Ndadaye and his collaborators were murdered- was still fresh in the memories and being used as a powerful reference. The points to raise here are twofold. Firstly, the impact of radio on the illiterate rural people whose means of information were limited either to immediate neighbours, rumours or radio was enormous. In Africa where the majority of the population are illiterate, people believe what the radio says as if it was the 'Gospel'.

In 1983, a survey which covered 94 % of Rwanda showed that for the population interviewed the belief was that "the radio tells the truth".⁶¹⁸ The second survey carried out in 1987 interviewed 100 persons per prefecture, in all more than 1000 people. It confirmed this unchanged attitude regarding the 'truth' carrying power of the radio programmes⁶¹⁹. Clearly, for the majority of the population, the voice of the radio is the voice of the authorities, and the voice of the authorities is an order to accept and execute unquestionably. This survey

⁶¹⁶ Faustin Rucogoza was murdered together with his family by the Presidential Guard early in the morning of 7 April 1994.

⁶¹⁷ R.T.L.M Programme broadcast on 10 March 1994. Recorded by B.B. The reference to the death of Ndadaye (Hutu elected democratically President in Burundi in June 1993 and killed on 21 October of the same year by a Tutsi dominated army brought the extremists to officially launch the "Hutu power ideology" in a rally calling for solidarity with the Hutu of Burundi, October 25.

The reference to the snake (serpent) and infiltration reminds us of the cynical misconceptions of the Hutu hard-liners on the Tutsi.

⁶¹⁸ Eberhard, P., "Evaluation report of Rwanda project" (communication). Kigali: CPR, 1988.

⁶¹⁹ Ibid. p.4. The authors mentioned an official survey carried out by Rwanda government with the technical help of Deutch Well (a relay station of Radio Cologne for Africa) based in Kigali.

implicitly invokes illiteracy and ignorance, but in the end, there is also the history of authoritarian regimes which have proved to be violent against the population.

Secondly, the absence of objectivity and honesty in media broadcasts was acknowledged in both camps by the opposition and the journalists of the extremist media. Intervening in the conference on "Objectivity and honesty in political information", in Kigali, in late March 1994, the new Minister of Information (tutor of the public and private Media), Faustin Rucogoza who belonged to the opposition, strongly criticised anti-professional practice in Rwandan journalism.

Ces journalistes, ou soi-disant journalistes, ne se gênent pas d'utiliser des calomnies, des accusations sans preuve, des altérations de documents, des déformations des faits ou du mensonge, alors que tout cela constitue les plus graves fautes dont un journaliste peut se rendre coupable... on a vu des journalistes animer des débats radiodiffusés ou télévisés, non pas en journalistes intègres, honnêtes et objectifs, mais en militants acharnés et passionnés de partis politiques ou de leurs factions.⁶²⁰

Speaking at the same conference, Gahigi, chief editor of RTLM, recognised the influence of radio which covered the whole country. He criticised energetically the Rwandan press for being partial, versed in the propaganda of political leaders who financed them.

L'objectivité a été délibérément faussée et la critique des journalistes ne se résume qu'à une énumération de défauts souvent inventées de toute pièce; l'objectif étant de ternir l'image de marque d'un opposant ou d'un adversaire politique"... Elle (la presse) n'a pu ni apporter les faits avérés de façon fidèle et honnête, ni mettre au grand jour la vérité cachée derrière les faits par un commentaire juste et pertinent⁶²¹.

The overwhelming responsibility of a journalist who turns into militant of an ideology to the detriment of truth cannot be otherwise highlighted as in these two passages. The assessment of the responsibility of media in inviting to violence was identical in the three camps, the 'democratic' camp represented by the free media and the 'anti-democratic' represented by RTLM and Kangura; and finally the Government represented by the Minister of Information. It must be remembered that the media of hatred were under the control of the Akazu group evoked before which was beyond any legal system.

V.3.2.4. Creating the Phantasm of Genocide

Having shown the extent of the venom and hatred inherent in radio broadcasts and programmes, and having considered the role of media as transmitters of genocide propaganda, it must be added that media alone would not have succeeded in the crime without the involvement of political and military machinery. Beyond the 'stimulus-response' theory or 'magic bullet theory'⁶²² of the 1940s, other factors such as educational, religious,

⁶²⁰ Rucogoza, F., "Allocution d'ouverture" du Symposium sur Honnêteté et objectivité dans l'information politique, Kigali du 16-18 mars 1994. In Dialogue, No 175, April-May 1994, p.36/7.

⁶²¹ Gahigi, Contribution in a panel "la Presse dans le Processus Démocratique", Kigali, 15 mars 1994. In Dialogue no 175, Avril-Mai 1994, p.17/18). Gahigi's presentation was certainly designated to promote his image and that of his Radio before an international parterre of diplomats and journalists, politicians, religious leaders, conveyed to the meeting. Then, the minister Rucogoza commented in private, "on ne reconnaît pas l'homme Gahigi, rédacteur en chef de RTLM dans Gahigi le conférencier" (translation: one does not recognise Gahigi, editor in chief of RTLM and Gahigi of the Conference).

⁶²² According to that theory, people who are exposed to a message spread by media produce the same effects, direct and uniform. Experiences have shown that it was with additional factors such as famine in the south, the economic crisis, the Structural Adjustment Programmes of the IMF/WB, the erosion of the Habyarimana regime, the war and resistance to democracy were factors that corroborated ethnic propaganda. Higi, J.M.V, op.cit, p.170.

economic and social values discussed in chapter six also had additional impact; they have corroborated the ethnic propaganda in Rwanda. What this section of work tries to explore here is how the hard-liners who happened to be among the major actors of the crisis exploited the impact of these factors through media to justify their choice of the Batutsi people as their scapegoats so as to create the phantasm of genocide.

According to Charny a genocide cannot happen if the population does not adhere to its mechanisms. Hence, the organisers must abolish the law of 'animal ethiology' (*la loi de l'ethiologie animale*) according to which the species of the same family do not kill each other except in particular circumstances like over-population. In Rwanda, the barriers of repugnance were annihilated to weaken the socio-cultural and moral inhibitions in the demonising and the 'instrumentalising' of the enemy. The genocide propaganda would broadcast supposed plans through which the Batutsi were about to exterminate the Bahutu. It ridiculed the Batutsi and their 'accomplices' at such a extent that even the vocabulary utilised applied to wild animals and insects. This process generated a syndrome of fear exploited by the hard-liners to create a solidarity in crime. For example, the latter encouraged the phenomenon of mobs that ensures anonymity and the 'deculpabilisation' of individuals.

I. Charny⁶²³ argues that genocide comes as a result of successive events developing in an exponential order. The genocide happens in societies where the communitarian, religious, ethnic, tribal and classical sense of belonging have precedence over that of individuals. The chronology of the events unfolded as follows: installation of the societal forces for the destruction of life, a major historical, economic, political hegemony, social events which form the ideology; the catalyst factors; the mobilisation of the means to carry out the genocide and their legitimisation; the execution of the genocide and subsequent denial of its reality. If safeguards and preventatives were not put in place, the processes may commence with innocuous events, such as martial law, the suppression of freedom of speech and movement and curfews. A virtual event exploited by a leader or an elite to serve their own purposes can also become a prelude to genocide⁶²⁴.

In that sense, an example that has similarities to the pre-genocide period in Rwanda is the Nazi system. As Tschuy recalls, Hitler emerged from among ordinary people, led and electrified them. He took for pretext the vengeful features of the Versailles Treaty and blamed capitalists and Communists, nobility, and above all Jews for the lost war and the lamentable state of Germany. 'Little people', youths, discharged soldiers, college and

⁶²³ Deschamps, Philip and Elisabeth., "Le modèle d'Israël W. Charny. How can we commit the unthinkable? Genocide, the human cancer". Boulder co, Westview, 1982. In *Dialogue* no 190, Avril-Mai 1996, pp 10-32. Charny is a Professor of Psychology and therapy in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, I.W. Charny and his ally Canon Rapoport.

⁶²⁴ Economic degradation like in Germany of 1930 : in the case of Rwanda, the RPF attack, October 1990 and the death of president Habyarimana, 6 April 1994.

University students felt humiliated and impoverished by the lost war and they saw no future⁶²⁵.

Likewise, in Rwanda as indicated above through a few of the RTLM programmes, the August 1993 Arusha Peace Agreement was presented in the racist propaganda as a vengeful strategy of the Batutsi. These, claimed the propaganda, lost power over 1959 social revolution. They were now taking their revenge helped by the accomplices and naive Bahutu. The propaganda was facilitated by some features of the Agreement, i.e. the demobilisation of more than 75 % of the army so as to create a new army integrated with their counterparts of the RPF; and the fact that the bureaucrats of the MRND state-party who have been involved in the human rights abuse would be dismissed and presented to justice by the new administration resulting in the Peace Agreement.

Equally, the extremists worked out a strategy designed to connect ethnic rivalry with other ethno-politicians operating within the whole central Africa region. This strategy which sought to obtain the cohesion of the 'Bantu' people in the region and its theological ethics implications are examined in detail in further sections.

V.4. Sources of Ethnic Mobilisation

The ethnic mobilisation was oriented towards, on the one hand, the rooting of an anti-Batutsi culture evoked above, and on the other hand, the enthronement of Habyarimana as the only asset and saviour of the Bahutu. A typical argument and justification was as follows: if we lose him - and that could happen only by a putsch instigated by the Batutsi and their accomplices - not only would the Bahutu lose their natural rights to power but also most of them would end up being exterminated..

V. 4.1. The 1959 Social Revolution

The 1959 revolution during which the Bahutu reversed the monarchy was then introduced, re-actualised with a heavy campaign to appeal to the Bahutu of Rwanda and their kin in the region to awake so as to resist the re-emerging Batutsi-domination. The campaigners would brandish the example of the Burundi crises in which they identified several genocides and offer it as proof of what the Bahutu of the region would experience. Let look now to some other axes of the ethnic mobilisation.

For J.P. Chrétien and his allies, the 1994 genocide was a continuation of a racial ideology initiated in the 1950s by means of the 'Bahutu manifesto' and kept alive in a breviary of ethnically motivated accusations against the Batutsi by the hard-liners like the 'ten commandments' of the 'Hutu power' ideology. Chrétien's group adds that there has been a religious mobilisation for ethnic ideology from the time of the consecration of Rwanda to Christ the king; the support offered by bishop Perraudin to the leaders of the 1959 Revolution as well as the participation of Archbishop Nsengiyumva in the MRND ruling party. The

⁶²⁵ Tschuy,T., Ethnic Conflict and Religion, Geneva: WCC, 1997,p,17.

outline of the genocide, they said, was announced between 1990 and 1994 but the Churches, the human rights organisations and the media failed to address it⁶²⁶.

Chrétien and allies are right to indicate that 1990 to 1994 was the crucial steps in the preparation of the genocide. However, Chrétien's led study omitted among other things to link the roots of the ethnic ideology with its shoots in the political, administrative colonial administration measures as indicated in chapters two, three and four of the present work. Firstly, from 1900 a sum of constellations including the race supremacy theories propagated by the triple coalition, colonisers, missionaries, the ruling class, the heavy burden against the peasantry, had all infected the mentalities and entrenched some of the elite in both communities in ethnic analysis of Rwandan reality.

Secondly, it is indisputable to say that this ethnic polarisation of the 50s early 60s seemed to have settled down in the 70s and 80s. As shown in chapter four, the dual character of Rwandan society is entangled in ethnic tensions, but in fact, the northern Bahutu faction in power was polarised against the rest of the country. The Regional not ethnic duality was far more important in Rwanda politics prior to the 1990s. Bahutu-Batutsi antagonism was revived in 90s, particularly following the RPF attack and when the multiparty system was restored in 1991; it was accelerated towards the end of 1993 by unscrupulous ethno-politicians in power struggle. Nkiko and Gasana accurately put it as follows:

Ethnicity in Rwanda is therefore an organising factor for access to power and resources, two ends that are not related to ethnic differences as such. On the local basis, it is an undisputed truism that Hutu and Tutsi lived together in full harmony and peace. There was no issue opposing them along the ethnic lines. Social interactions including intermarriages were more a general rule than an exception. Even competition for scarce land resources was not at all described in ethnic terms. On the national level, it is the educated elites competing for power and national resources who artificially created the ethnic conflict⁶²⁷.

These authors are right to underline the fact that the Banyarwanda people lived in harmony. This was not necessarily the achievement of the Habyarimana regime, but an internal social dynamic resulting from the fact that Bahutu and Batutsi share every single aspect of the daily reality, social, spiritual, cultural, provided the ethno-politician do not intervene to inject the venom. To undermine such a harmony, the anti-peace circles have worked hard, using the 'media of hatred' and other tools, combining psychological pressure to physical threats against both the victims and those suspected to oppose their cynical project.

The past stereotypes, the resentment and policies of scapegoats were called on to divide society to fit their selfish gains. The best illustration of the source and aim of the ethnic mobilisation being the gain of power and resource rather than 'secular hatred' were the attacks broadcast or published against personalities- other than Batutsi or Rwandan- or institutions and countries which had manifested their interest to help Rwanda in the implementation of the Arusha Peace Agreement, particularly Belgium, UN, the UN troops' Commander so as to force them pull out as indicated in section 3.2.3.

⁶²⁶ Ibid., p.382.

⁶²⁷ Gasana, J& Nkiko, N., *Breaking Hutu-Tutsi enmity in Rwanda Through Reconciliation. Can there be Hope again?* Lausanne, 1997, P.6.

Surprisingly, the most virulent anti-Belgian attack came from a Belgian native, Georges Ruggiu who joined the RTLM as journalist in its early beginning. General Dallaire acknowledges the fact, though as diplomat and soldier, he tried to dilute the harm on the morale of his troops in saying that the campaign was not "of such a scale as to render the presence of UNAMIR, as neutral force, compromised or ineffective".⁶²⁸

The destructive role of the RTLM and other media and their shareholders who participated in the spread of racist propaganda was highlighted by many observers⁶²⁹. The ambassador of Belgium in Rwanda sent many letters to his government requesting international pressure on Habyarimana to stop the RTLM harmful activities. Reporting the visit in Rwanda of J. Delcroix, then Minister for Defence of Belgium, in the late March 1994, Ambassador J. Swinnen wrote:

On promet au Ministre que l'on veillerait à ce que la RTLM modéré le ton de ses émissions. La Première Ministre Agathe partageait son inquiétude au sujet de RTLM. Elle était d'avis que Habyarimana avait une part de responsabilité dans les événements. Elle insista pour que la communauté internationale intensifie ses pressions sur le Président. Le Ministre Delcroix mit l'accent sur les "échéances importantes".⁶³⁰

The divisive character of the RTLM ethnic mobilisation has gone beyond the Rwandan borders and affected the former colonial power in the very heart of its Cabinet which was divided on which position to take. The Ambassador in Kigali, John Swinnen was in favour of a diplomatic and political pressure to be put on Habyarimana and his entourage, while some members of the Cabinet in Brussels, including Minister J. Delcroix were openly sympathetic to the Habyarimana camp. Hence, the reports sent to Brussels by Ambassador Swinnen and other warnings, from media or independent observers were kept dead letter. This led Mrs. Alice de Forge to say that: "The international community has missed the opportunity from 1992 to exercise pressure on Habyarimana so as to stop the genocide"⁶³¹. RTLM continued its evil campaign against what it considered as the threats against the "rule of the majority", the Batutsi and the democratic opposition.

V.4.2. Resourcing in History Resentment

The racist propaganda would dig also into the repertoire of legends, myths, and into the collective representations that project the present into a recent or distant past as shown in chapter one. The authors, the ideologues of the regime, aimed to reproduce a hierarchical, unopposed oral, feudal, esoteric and non verified culture of communication for a monolithical exercise of power. The top to bottom culture which shaped social life through what Rukebeshu has called the 'esoteric' communication was built upon a number of principles: first, a tendency to divinise the ruler whose word would be unopposed. The

⁶²⁸ Mahoux & Verhofstadt., Rapport de la Commission Parlementaire Belge sur les Événements du Rwanda, Bruxelles, December 1997, p. 308.

⁶²⁹ Twagiramungu, F., then Prime Minister in the RPF government called the "government of National unity": Conférence de Presse à Kigali, 23 Mars 1995, diffusé par Radio Rwanda, 24 Mars 1995 à 6.45. He said: "we thought that extremism has gone with RTLM, Kangura and all the chain. Today, the influence of Radio is equally becoming more destructive than constructive".

⁶³⁰ Mahoux & Verhofstadt, op.cit. p.311.

⁶³¹ Ibid. p. 129.

sheepish obedience before, during and after colonial periods had root causes not in the culture of untruth in Rwanda but rather in the fear of repression and state violence, an aspect discussed in further sections.

The second principle was intolerance. Political activities had gradually degenerated into a situation where once in power, the ruler wanted to remain there for ever. Habyarimana characterised the situation well in calling himself, *ikinani*, the invincible (or the irremovable) who reigns by *ubwiru* (esoterism, an official function assumed by the ritualists called abiru, keepers of the monarchical constitution with a small group of the entourage-family, the *akazu* (household)).

Thus, the *akazu k' I bwami* (the household of the court) would mean the small group in the Abahindiro/Banyiginya and Bega clans who competed to control the system of privileges. During the last decade of the Habyarimana reign, akazu symbolised influential members of his entourage and from the family of his wife who, as throughout the monarchical period, earned their positions not because of competence but on account of being born in the native region of the President's family.

This group became the true centre of power who overturned most of the administrative decisions which did not safeguard their interests. In his letter of resignation from the MRND, the former director of ORINFOR, C. Mfizi characterised the Akazu- entourage of Habyarimana as the 'Reseau-Zero', 'Ikiguri-Nunga' (the zero network), and called them destructive parasites⁶³². The Akazu members were the organisers of all the acts of violence, assassination, mass killings and genocide; they symbolised all the attitudes of nepotism and egoism in the Churches and political parties⁶³³. When the hard-liners within the MRND founded the CDR to oppose "politically and militarily the RPF by mobilising the Hutu", the Batutsi and democrat Bahutu who yearned the political changes had no other destiny but to be crushed, systematically eliminated. The Kinyarwanda expression used was: *Gutsembatsemba inyenzi n'ibytso*, literally, to eliminate the cockroaches and the betrayals.

The logic behind this was to ridicule the enemy to the status of an insignificant animal and to sow into the conscience of the masses that killing the Batutsi or their supporters was not a crime. Several mobs of killers and militia would circulate the streets and villages with arms, grenades, nailed sticks in what they called 'guhumbahumba ibytso' (collecting for killing the

⁶³² Mfizi, C., Letter to President Habyarimana resigning from the MRND, Paris, July, 1992. In Guichoua, op.cit. p.617.

⁶³³ The Belgian Ambassador to Kigali, J.Swinnen described the 'general staff of the Akazu group in charge of the extermination of the Tutsi and the crush the Hutu internal opposition so as to resolve the Rwandan problem on their manner', as including: the three brothers-in - law of Habyarimana (P. Zigiranyirazo, chairman; Col. E. Sagatwa; S. Rwabukumba); Capt. P. Simbikangwa; Col. Serubuga; F. Karera; Cdt Gacinya; Col. A. Nsengiyumva and Col. T. Renzaho, then Prefet of Kigali. Mahoux and Verhofstadt, op.cit. p.257. R. Lemarchand has the same view. He estimates that the machinery of genocide was installed from 1992. It includes, on the top, a) the members of Akazu in which he adds on the list of Ambassador Swinnen, the Wife of Habyarimana; J. Nziroera, a member of the Habyarimana cabinet, close to his family, J. Gashumba, a Habyarimana's nephew; b) organisations in Communes and rural areas (200 to 300 people per commune); c) the militia Interahamwe (more or less 30,000 members);d) the Presidential-Guard army members recruited exclusively in the northern stronghold of Habyarimana. Mahoux and Verhofstadt, op.cit. p. 248.

last traitors). This was an appeal repetitively made in the 'media of hatred', RMLM, Kangura newspaper and the alike.

This led the opposition to say that *ingoma zirasa* (all the drums: all the regimes were identical). During the 1990s struggle for political changes, they invented the term *Kubohozza*, to liberate people from the Ubuhake of Habyarimana and MRND (liberating from the bondage of Habyarimana and MRND). Yet, the MRND old guards were still calling their party, *Ishyaka ry'amahoro n'ubumwe* (the party of peace and unity), regardless of all the killings and assassinations of which they were being accused. The MDR activists would call theirs, *ishyaka ry'umucyo* (a party of lights); PSD: *ishyaka ry'amizero ya rubanda* (the party of hope for people), and the extremist CDR militants would call themselves: *ishyaka rya rubanda nyamwinshi* (the party of the vast majority).

This propaganda founded on myths and lies exploited by extremists and political bigotry has led some superficial analysts to confuse verbal and political violence with the culture of untruth in Rwanda. P. Erny and Overdulse drew a bizarre conclusion from Maquet's study (particularly his famous theorems of inequality in Rwanda) that truth was not what mattered in Rwandan communication but the relations with the superior. Overdulse⁶³⁴ suggests that communication is biased in Rwanda because unlike European society, Rwanda was not penetrated by the "Judeo-Christian tradition which penetrated profoundly the 'Euro-american'⁶³⁵ culture and influenced and transformed it".

However a counterculture of the hierarchical esoteric communication existed and dismisses the Maquet's study. *Ukuri guca mu iziko ntigushya* (the truth crosses the fire without burning) or *aho kunigwa ni ijamba wanigwa n'uwo uribwiye* (instead of being strangled by a word/truth, better being strangled by the one to whom you tell it). With regard to the culture of blind obedience spread by the clique that controlled power, Rwandan had *umwami yicara ku ntebe udi abajisha iye* (the king sits on a chair/see whilst his successor prepares his own), meaning that the attempt to monopolise power was an illusion. Equally, in Rwandan society the true *umugabo* (being a true human being) is a man or a woman who lives upon the truth (*umunyakuri*).

We must then distinguish the entire culture of sitting room developed in the monolithic systems and the social culture of people. In the former, the elite thirsty for privileges owe their promotion not to their competence, nor to their desire for transparency in communication but to their loyal and blind worship of the ruler. In the events of daily life, activities such as marriages, socio-economic relationships and other forms of solidarity, conflict resolving, the community rely on men and women of integrity who command respect above the lineages, clans and social classes because they are known to be truthful.

⁶³⁴ Overdulse, C.M., "Fonction de la Langue et de la Communication au Rwanda". In *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* (Nouvelle Revue de Science Missionnaire), Separat-Abdruck, 53-1997/4, P.283.

⁶³⁵ The author precises that American notion here refers to those Americans of European extraction. Ibid.p.271.

Overdulse and Erny's ideological remarks have been misled by the fact that these counterculture mechanisms did not work during the crises. The reasons why these mechanisms did not work in Rwanda may be the same as elsewhere where predominant forces have erupted, violated moral principles and ruled out the pact between the leader and the nation in reigning by terror. Here, the population would approve what seems to be realistic for their safety whatever society they belong to as proved in the example of the NAZI regime or the Serbo-Yugoslavia case suggested by Cerovic below in section 4.5.

That said, Overdulse's argument points to another reality: the hypocrisy of past and present missionaries, expatriate and local who have not been transformed by the Gospel but put the mask so as to profess Christian faith to Rwandans. This resembles the story of an ape recounted by Gregory of Nyssa. A travelling showman trained an ape so that it could appear with dancing girls behind a mask like a human being. The act which was warmly applauded everywhere was once ended by a knavish spectator. He threw nuts on the stage. The ape pulled out the mask and started eating the nuts⁶³⁶!

The mask as it has been shown in chapter three can be the christianising of society by the same people who bore the Hamite theory of supremacy and the Churches invested in a civilising role; it can also be, as shown in chapter four, a hierarchy which because it was blinded by the so-called "Church-state good relations" continued to legitimate the MRND dreadful system.

V. 4.3. Habyarimana and Kayibanda, Similar Goals?

In the final attempt of the extremists to mobilise the unity of the Bahutu, they sought to show Habyarimana as the man who would pursue and fulfil the aspirations and ideals in the spirit of PARMEHUTU leadership, the party that led the country to its independence. In issue no 12 of Kangura, February 1991, Habyarimana was presented as the spouse of the Rwandans on his 55th birthday, and some journalists who do not share the ideas of the hard-liners were accused of being in the Inkotanyi trap.

Many observers acknowledged the fact that the first ten years of the Habyarimana regime were successful in bringing about economic and social development. This was recognised by many organisations, both local and international. However, the defenders of the regime behaved as if the credit for the achievements of the nation, like the *Umuganda*, belonged to Habyarimana alone or to a band of the rulers not to the population.

The campaign of the regime extended to the co-ordination of the extremist groups around the President's family and to the leaders of the extremist factions within the political parties. There was a deliberate policy designed to exploit the image of Grégoire Kayibanda, the leader of independence, in the 'Bahutu Unite project'. A desperate attempt to recuperate Kayibanda's thinking and legacy was undertaken in Kangura no 31 and 32, February 1992.

⁶³⁶ Thiellicke, H., *Theological Ethics. Tome II. Politics*, London: Adam & Charles Black, 1969, p.70.

The late President made a post-mortem visit to his political moderate heirs (the MDR, opposition to the MRND) whom he blamed for having made an alliance with the Batutsi of the RPF. To the sadness of the partisans of the former President, his image was exploited in the most indecent way. In Kangura no 40 of March 1993 and again its special magazine of 26 December 1993 the newspaper presented Kayibanda on the cover, with a machete beside him asking if the founder of Parmehutu party would be happy with the alliance between his renovated party and the Batutsi. But in such a volatile political climate there was little room for protest for those who were concerned for the misinterpretation of his thought and actions. There was then a mobilisation to execute what the hard-liners called the "unfinished agenda of the 1959 revolution". Such a call was made in February 1993 in Bugesera by Justin Mugenzi, president of the Liberal Party (the extremist faction) during a meeting of his party. RTLM and Kangura created a space for debate appealing to the remnants among the 1959 politicians or their children to boast of the bravery of the revolution and how they perceived that the 'remaining task' could be accomplished. Actually the discussions always revolved around the themes of the generosity of the Bahutu and of Habyarimana who left the Batutsi to prosper, or the fact that the present troubles arrived because the Batutsi had escaped alive towards their exile; this, it must be remembered, was the theme of Leon Mugesera in the Kabaya "call for genocide massacres".

V.4.4. Control of Conscience

The system initiated from 1973 by Habyarimana was a process of 'the control of conscience' described in chapter four as 'Humiriza nkuyobore'⁶³⁷. Extracts of the President speeches were reproduced for meetings or for any particular political, social event and were treated with the same reverence. In the media, the 'divine words' of the President preceded and closed the news on Radio and Television several times each day. They were taken as conclusions and decisions, more than any parliamentary law. They were never questioned or debated in any organ. B. Habimana, then Secretary General of the MRND, would repeat that the wish of the President was equivalent to the law. Thus, "it was no surprise", says J.M.V. Higiho, "that during the multi-party government period, decision-making authorities would dig through the extracts of the President's speeches to use them as reference of authority and repeat key passages from them religiously as a clergyperson consulting the Bible during the preparation of a sermon"⁶³⁸.

The President was so committed to maintaining his dominance over the system of information that when the Minister of Information in the multi-party coalition government, P. Ndengejeho from the opposition, decided to suppress the presidential slogans on the national radio and Television during the first year of the political coexistence, a governmental crisis arose. All the nine MRND ministers (half of the Cabinet) refused to participate anymore in

⁶³⁷ Literally: Close your eyes to let me guide / command you. See also the process of divinising the ruler in chapter four.

⁶³⁸ Dialogue, no 147. JMV. Higiho was head of the State Office of Information (ORINFOR)

the cabinet meetings unless the slogans were reinstated. The crisis ended temporarily when the two parties agreed to relocate the presidential slogans somewhere else in the radio and television schedules⁶³⁹.

V.4.5. Manipulating Emotions for Ethnic Solidarity

The extremist media carried out other functions: they called forth nationalist feelings, justified the ethnocide and violence against the Batutsi and Bahutu victims using the pretext of 'secular rivalry'; they strove to eradicate any traces of guilt surrounding various organised massacres⁶⁴⁰

In a tentative move to force the blind adhesion of all the Cabinet members to the hard-line ideology during the period prior to the political changes, Kangura issue no 13 of April 1991 showed on its front page photographs of six members of the cabinet hanged by one of their colleagues⁶⁴¹. The victims were accused of being either Batutsi who falsified their identity cards or accomplices of the Inkotanyi. Then the newspaper wrote: "President Habyarimana said that there are some whose views (in the crisis) are false. Would these people be of any help to him"? Some days after, all of the ministers who were shown 'hanged' were revoked from the Cabinet. There might be two possible interpretations here: either a decision to sack the undesirable had been taken and a psychological preparation of public opinion was seen as necessary; or a psychological pressure was urging them to sell their spirit and conscience to hard-liners⁶⁴².

From its first year of existence in 1990 to the first half of 1993, Kangura's effects were contained in particular due to some valuable anti-hatred campaign taken by the NGOs, Human rights organisations, 'democrat media' and the political opposition. But in late 1991, the violent groups including the death squads within the army (Amasasu), the interahamwe militia of MRND, the Abahuzamugambi militia of CDR party politics and the 'media of hatred' started to co-ordinate their activities. In March 1992 the massacres of the Batutsi in Bugesera were preceded by a set of combined actions engineered by the extremists. In November 1991, Ngeze Hassan, the editor of the Kangura news paper circulated anti-Batutsi

⁶³⁹ Ibid., p. 102/3.

⁶⁴⁰ Nsengiyumva, F., *Ingoma y'amaraso* (the bloodshed regime). Editions CLACHO, Kigali, 1995: pp 24-86.

⁶⁴¹ The six victims were: B. Habimana, General -Secretary of MRND; T. Mujezimana, Minister of Justice; J.M.V. Mugemana, Minister of Interior; A. Ntashamaje, Minister of Relationship between the Institutions; F. Habyakare, Minister of Public services and Employment; A.M. Nkubito, Attorney general. The hunger was D. Mbangura, Minister of Education.

⁶⁴² Mbangura, a former Deputy-Chancellor of the National University of Rwanda, Principal of the Ruhengeri's Campus. Member of the Central Committee of MRND, he was from the south, Gikongoro, he was appointed Minister of Education and made his popularity in giving primacy to intellectual capacity over nepotism. He then became the target of Kangura Newspaper. He was the one who was hanging his colleagues; he ended in the cabinet of the genocidal interim government. *Mujezimana, from south-west, Kibuye, Minister of Justice*, tried unsuccessfully to issue false and biased declarations concerning arbitrary arrests of the so-called October 1990 'ibytso' extending even among children, at the beginning of the war. Yet, that could not save his position in a cabinet from which he was sacked and replaced by M. Ngirumpatse, later general Secretary of the MRND and initiator of the Interahamwe militia. Mujezimana later joined the opposition before being killed at *Murindi*, then the stronghold of RPF.

tracts in the region and began to supply petrol to local relays including local authorities which later served to burn Batutsi houses⁶⁴³.

The plan took a crucial turn in early December 1991 when President Habyarimana himself chaired a meeting of the senior officers of the army to plan how to win the war against the RPF using the media, diplomacy and politics. As an outcome of the meeting, a working group was set up to continue the strategy. They later extended the definition of the concept of the 'enemy' to the Batutsi, their 'accomplices' in the country and those in international organisations⁶⁴⁴.

On 2nd of March 1992, J.B. Bamwanga, Director of Programs on Rwanda Radio, and a very famous extremist (one of the founder members of the RTLM) repeatedly spread a false communiqué attributed to a so-called 'organisation of non-violence' supposedly based in Nairobi. The communiqué called the 'patriots' to resist the RPF's plan to eliminate Bahutu politicians regardless of their political tendency. However, it was proved that what the communiqué called the "direction of the military operation" did not exist in the Rwandan military organisation. Nevertheless, two days later, on 4 March the Bugesera region was immersed in 'fire and blood'; more than 500 people were killed⁶⁴⁵.

A plan including the recruiting and arming of the Interahamwe militia was confirmed as part of the strategy following a proposal made by Colonel Nsabimana, then commander of the Mutara sector (border with Uganda). He suggested heavy military recruitment, training and the distribution of arms to young people in the communes within the region⁶⁴⁶. This campaign of violence was denounced by two senior army officers, colonels Rusatira and Rutayisire in a letter addressed on 3rd December 1993 to the UN General secretary representative in Kigali. The officers unveiled Habyarimana's plan to massacre some key personalities of the opposition as part of sabotage of the peace accord⁶⁴⁷.

The systematic control of information combined with a campaign of violence applied at various levels, government, ruling party institutions, the state administration, the army, the media. This seems to be true for most other dictatorships. First, the regime has to ensure that it has the elite on its side who share the ideal of nationalist feelings. Second, the totalitarian and authoritarian regimes use these elite to enrol the population. S.Cerovic, a Montenegrin journalist says that in a regime of ethnic purification 'professionalism' means a ferocious

⁶⁴³ Our interview in Maranyundo (Anglican) and Nyamata (Catholic) parishes, in March 1992 with the priests and hundreds of the Tutsi exiled in the parishes.

⁶⁴⁴ Among many other communiqués broadcast by ORINFOR was a so-called "Message of the direction of the military operations" warning the population on the strategies of the enemy supposed manipulating the opposition and also a so-called letter from a Nairobi based organisation on the no-violence. The latter message charged the RPF to have planned to kill several personalities of Hutu background from different political parties. In one of the program 22 names were diffused. See Guichoua, A. op. cit. p. 611 ff.

⁶⁴⁵ ADL, *Rapport sur les Droits de l'Homme au Rwanda de Septembre 1991 à Septembre 1992* . See also Guichoua, A, *Les Crises Politiques au Burundi et au Rwanda 1993-1994*. Paris: Karthala, pp. 610 ff. And also Reyntjens, F, *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs (Rwanda-Burundi) en Crise (1988-1993)*.

⁶⁴⁶ See letter of colonel Nsabimana of 29/9/1991 in Guichoua, A, op.cit. p.651. Later, Col. D. Nsabimana was promoted General and chief of the staff. He died in same plane that killed president Habyarimana.

⁶⁴⁷ Guichoua, A, o.p.cit, p. 653.

propaganda. During the Hitler period, what mattered was not to inform objectively but to win the war even as journalist. Hence neutral and objective information becomes impossible.

In a totalitarian society, where the dominant regime controls the media and sells its ideology, everyone has a single channel of information and interpretation of the reality, i.e. the dominant ideology. On the one hand, the population listens because it is the only way to survive; on the other hand, people who have not known 'liberty' for a long period are not able to demythologise the regime and its worth. In the whole process remarks Cerovic, the role of the intelligentsia in particular in determining the ideological models is enormous; without them, no totalitarian system can survive⁶⁴⁸.

Cerovic's analysis applies accurately to Rwanda. In spite of the so-called plurality of media and attempts by some of the newly formed political parties and NGO efforts to give more accurate and honest information to the population, as stated earlier, the information remained under the control of the regime, apart from the few independent analyses in newspaper with insignificant circulation of 1000 to 2000 copies irregularly produced. This reinforced the phenomenon of 'intellectual illiteracy' evoked before and carefully planned by the regime. The elite were moulded in one way of thinking and reasoning. Secondly, the academics including Léon Mugesera, Ferdinand Nahimana, Maniragabe Baributsa and others played a negative role if not as organisers but as early theoreticians and activists in RTLM radio. The massacres in the University campuses left 400 students, 50 professors and 150 staff of the Rwanda National University dead⁶⁴⁹.

V.4.6. Mobilising Hatred Nationally and Internationally

Another axis of the genocide campaign was the mobilisation on national and international levels. Following the attack of the RPF (October 1990), Kangura launched a heavy home and abroad anti-Batutsi campaign with documentation whose authenticity was not proved. From its issue no 4, November 1990, the newspaper published what it called the "Tutsi Plan for the colonisation of the Kivu region (Zaire) and of the Central region of Africa". The editor, Ngeze Hassan, published the photocopy of the so-called plan affirming that it was contained in a "letter of August 1962 discovered during the events of 1959-1962 in the north Kivu region"(Congo-Zaire).

The plan whose dates recalled the events of Rwandan history that pushed some of the Batutsi nobility to move to the Kivu (Congo- Zaire) region, outlined in 19 points a number of principles. In brief, the authors estimate that because the Batutsi were few in number, to achieve the colonising of the region, they ought to develop a friendship with the Bahutu/Bantu in different levels of their administration by offering presents, in particular in

⁶⁴⁸ Cerovic, S, "L'information est-elle Possible face a la Propagande"? In Moucharafief, C. (ed.), Expériences et Réflexions sur la Reconstruction Nationale et la Paix (Actes de la Conférence Internationale sur la Reconstruction du Rwanda, Kigali 22-28 Octobre 1994.), Paris: Fondation pour le Progrès de l'homme (FPH), dph No 64, pp.189-192.

⁶⁴⁹ Nsengimana, J, Speech on the occasion of the opening ceremony of the National University of Rwanda, a on 2 April 1995 a year after the genocide. Broadcast by Rwanda Radio on 3 April 1995.

giving their daughters in marriage and in dividing those among the Bahutu who would attempt to promote an eventual ethnic conscience.

Following the death of R. Bisengimana, a prominent personality in the Government of Mobutu whose origin was traced to Banyarwanda,⁶⁵⁰ Kangura issue 18 of July 1991 announced that the Batutsi of the Kivu-Zaire region would be exterminated. 'Prophecy'! In March-May 1993, more than 10.000 people of Kinyarwanda speakers established in the Kivu region for centuries or installed by the colonial powers during the first half of the 20th century were massacred in horrific conditions by the militia and Mobutu's army⁶⁵¹.

In December 1990, Kangura no 6 published what it called 'les dix commandements', "a breviary of hatred against the Tutsi" which it urged the Bahutu to apply. The rules criminalised any Hutu who would employ or continue to intermarry with the Tutsi; that would be a betrayal of republican institutions. The paper requested that all the positions in administration, schools, business, army be reserved for the Bahutu. It would consider any Hutu who would marry a Tutsi girl or recruit them for a job as a betrayal. The breviary had a striking resemblance to the *Protocol of the elders of Zion*, an anti-Jewish document which was published by the Nazis to manipulate the world opinions against the Jewish which in fact, provided the motivation for the sending of thousands of Jews into pogroms⁶⁵².

The paper pursued its international call for Bahutu solidarity and the rule of the majority. Those in high positions who refused to apply the proposed cynical actions were accused of collaborating with the enemy⁶⁵³. The theme of Bahutu ethnic solidarity was maintained in issue number nine. The paper not only argued for the maintenance of the ethnic definition in the identity card but urged the Bahutu to "rediscover their ethnic identity to which could belong 15 million individuals, because the Batutsi had taught them to ignore it"; it sought to "promote their Gihutu language" (sic). It proposed a so-called Bahutu cultural centre to be installed in Kigali and to have its branches in Bujumbura where they would help their 'kin' victims of a fifth genocide since 24 December 1991⁶⁵⁴. Additionally, the 'Bahutu nation' would have for its organ of expression, the Kangura newspaper itself to be edited from Goma⁶⁵⁵. The newspaper requested from its readers the extermination of the Inkotanyi and their accomplices.

⁶⁵⁰ An influential director of the Mobutu cabinet who was from the Zairians of Banyarwanda background. See *Jeune Afrique*, no 1870, Paris: Groupe Jeune Afrique, 6 to 12 November 1996, p23.

⁶⁵¹ On the historical considerations regarding the installation of the population of Kinyarwanda expression in Zaire, see a documented article of Ndeshyo Rurihose, dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Kinshasa in *Dialogue* no 192. Ndeshyo, Rurihose, "La Nationalité de la Population Zaïroise d'Expression Kinyarwanda au Regard de la Loi du 29 Juin 1981". In *Dialogue* no 192. Bruxelles. pp. 3-32. See also Tegera, Aloys "La Réconciliation Communautaire. Le Cas des Massacres du Nord-Kivu". In Guichoua, A, *Les Crises Politiques au Burundi et au Rwanda (1993-1994)*. Paris: Karhala/Université de Lille, 1995.

⁶⁵² Rubenstein.,R., "The Uniqueness of the Holocaust". In Rosenbaum. *Is Holocaust unique?* P.14.

⁶⁵³ Alphonse Marie Nkubito, then Attorney General who was charged to chair the Commission of trial of 10.000 Tutsi and 'accomplices' arrested from the 4th October 1990 and who manifested integrity as he was leader of human rights activities.

⁶⁵⁴ Reporters Sans Frontières, op. cit. appendixes 4.

⁶⁵⁵ Goma is the capital-city of the Kivu provinces of Zaire (Rep.Dem.Congo)

The accomplices of Inkotanyi are still among us and continue to threaten the institutions of justice; The 30 year- old democracy is nailed by the accomplices of Inkotanyi, if we are not vigilant they will exterminate us". On page four it read "Why do we curb our necks to be dominated in silence"? Kangura number ten became even more specific on the plan under preparation: 'Tumenye imigambi y'inkotanyi tubonereho kuzirikana uko tuzazitsembe (beware of Inkotanyi plans so that we can organise how to completely eliminate them'⁶⁵⁶.

The prevalent theme of elimination of 'Inkotanyi (RPF troops) n'ibiyitso' (traitors) loomed a metaphor to kill the Batutsi and the pacifist Bahutu. The impact of such a campaign outside Rwanda is difficult to measure. However, in such mobilisation, the Burundi crises would become the oil that fuelled the fire in the region. Some events in Burundi and Congo might have resulted from a dragging effect. In Burundi, for example, a document containing "17 rules of Batutsi" which has a virulent anti-Bahutu tone has been circulated in Bujumbura. The document exhumed the devil of ethnic purification. According to Guichoua, the message was the pursuit of the 21st October 1993 putsch⁶⁵⁷ in which died President Ndadaye and prevented a President of Hutu background from to ruling over Burundi⁶⁵⁸.

Equally, in Kivu- Zaire during the recent conflicts, the local elite have exhumed the above document published by Kangura about the "1959-1962 Batutsi's plan for the domination of the Kivu". There was one difference: the authors of the discovery in the 1990s Zairian conflict referred to the "Munyarwanda plan for the occupation of Kivu"⁶⁵⁹ instead of restricting it to the Batutsi.

Above all, the campaign would show a paranoia regarding the potential threat of an international plot against Rwanda. This country was considered as a model of success that was envied by its neighbours plus Belgium. The latter wanted to repay its bill to the Batutsi from whom it withdrew support in the 1950s while the United States of America came in as sponsor of the President of Uganda, Museveni as leader of the Hima empire in the region. Logically, the campaign was extended to the countries of the region with a pathetic appeal to form a "coalition of the Bantu for the defence of democracy". The name proposed sadly recalled the Coalition for the Defence of Democracy (CDR), responsible for the violent activities.

Such a campaign incites one to ask what happens on the other side, among the members of the RPF and the Batutsi community. For the Batutsi inside the country, there was no way they could express openly and publicly their feelings due to the prevalence of the monolithical system. In theory, most of the observers and researchers consulted have not been able to find evidence of direct invitation to hatred, either in the political and social organisations and the media created by the Batutsi. Rutazibwa, a priest who, after being

⁶⁵⁶ Kangura no 8 and 9.

⁶⁵⁷ Guichoua, A., op.cit. p.567.

⁶⁵⁸ The exploitation of the Burundi crisis by the campaigners took a new turn with the official launching of the 'Hutu Power' ideology on 25 October 1993 in the Nyamirambo stadium, Kigali. The Meeting during a rally in which the extremist defectors from the political parties of the opposition joined the MRND and the CDR to manifest their solidarity with the Bahutu of Burundi following the military putsch mentioned before. See details, chapter VI, the immediate factors of the genocide.

⁶⁵⁹ Willame, J-C. *Banyarwanda and Banyamurenge*, Paris/Bruxelles: L'Harmattan/CEDAF, 1997, p.56.

ordained by the pope during his visit in September 1990 in Rwanda, joined the RPF rebellion, rejects any suggestion of ethnic hatred within the Batutsi' organisations⁶⁶⁰. But it has been assumed that there exist extremists within their community too, though most of the material we studied, like the RPF literature and ideologues emphasise the need for the unity of the three communities, *Inyabutatu Nyarwanda* (the Rwandan tripartite). It equally appears certain that some fractions within the RPF would express in provocative language what is now considered to be sectarian attitudes. For example, the mobilisation of the 'Tutsi' youth to join the rebellion was perceived by the hard-liners in the other group as a war against the Bahutu' institutions. According to former Prime Minister, F. Twagiramungu, the Muhabura's language (Radio of the RPF) was non-violent but insidious. It appealed to arming to resist the attacks of their antagonist⁶⁶¹.

V.5. Churches Failed to Address Ethnic Mobilisation

The challenge raised by the ethnic mobilisation through media surprised the Churches which could do little. We may find the reasons for such a failure in the fact that the extremist groups behind the media of hatred prepared and co-ordinated their actions while none in the Church media and among the ecclesial hierarchies were available or willing to work on an anti-violence campaign.

V.5.1. The Churches did not Exorcise Hatred

Both Catholic and Protestant Churches had a considerable access to the media, both public and private as indicated in section V.1. In addition, unlike the local NGOs and Human rights organisations, the Churches were the oldest and most influential institutions but failed to harness the potential of this prominence by being persuasive and decisive in then resisting against evil.

Keith Clements, a member of an ecumenical team from the Churches of Britain who visited Rwanda and Burundi in 1995, accurately remarked that, "confronted with the question of the truth, the political and religious leaders retreated in an evasive flight into fatalism, and the inevitability of the conflict instead of developing a mature social and political analysis of the events"⁶⁶².

⁶⁶⁰ Rutazibwa, P., "Un pas vers la Réconciliation ou Piétinement dans le Racisme". In Dialogue no 197, Bruxelles, Mars-Avril 1997, p.43

⁶⁶¹ Twagiramungu, F., Témoignage devant la Commission Parlementaire Belge, le 30 mai 1997. In Mahoux and Verhofstadt, op.cit. 1997, p.20.

⁶⁶² The reports and publications of the CPR (Conseil Protestant du Rwanda) during the 1990-1993 period show an attempt to tackle the issue of 'Reconciliation'. Yet, there was still a long way to go. For example, it was only during 1993 that for the first time the CPR assembly reflected on its mandate of unity (August 1993) as it is taken from John 17:21.

Equally, the Communication department reports recounted the first ever visit of the CPR leaders in November 1993 to the regions conquered by the RPF in the north. The visit was a desperate attempt to respond to the remarks made by a delegation of WCC and AACC which came in Rwanda prior to the visit of the General Secretaries of the World Council of Churches (WCC), and the AACC, respectively Dr Konrad Raiser and Rev Jose Chipenda⁶⁶². The delegation including Ambassador Kiplagat from Kenya deplored the fact that the Church leaders had never tried to meet the spiritual needs of the populations living in the areas occupied since 1991 by the rebellion. CPR/Communication, Rapport, 1993, p.3. It seems plausible that this apathy, resulted from the incapacity to overcome the continuous dehumanising of the "enemy", the RPF, by the regime's propaganda.

Similarly, in the Burundi case, observes Clements, the tragedies have always been the outcome of political power being sought and clung on to as an end in itself and at all costs⁶⁶³. The Church leaders would repeat stereotypes of 'secular hatred' and become versed in the inevitability of war. Thus, they reproduced the manipulation of the ethno-politicians and nailed people into resignation and fatalism. However, without underestimating the resignation which affected most of the moral forces leaders, we must acknowledge that the situation needed a high degree of discernment. In an interview given to Robert Ménard, of 'Reporters sans Frontières', Father André Sibomana, then director of the Roman Catholic Weekly, Kinyamateka, activist of Human rights associations, showed how difficult it was to discern the danger in perspective; he said "we all have underestimated the force that RTLM represented. That has been a lethal error"⁶⁶⁴.

V.5.2. Brief Chronology of Kinyamateka and Kangura.

The following section proposes a chronology of the leading articles in Kinyamateka, the Catholic official voice in print media, and Kangura Newspapers, the leading print organ of the extremist groups⁶⁶⁵ from June/July 1993 to January 1994. This period was chosen to outline the attitude of both bi-monthly, at a turning point in the history of the country, the signature of the Peace Agreement and the installation of the transitional political and military institutions. Equally, the period corresponds to the arrival of the UN peace force and the 600 RPF soldiers who were due to supervise the 22 months transition period and to look after the security of officials of the rebellion.

The leading article of Kinyamateka issue no 1398 of July 1993 refers to the political leaders planning to delay the democratic elections while enjoying themselves in senior positions. The same issue reports the bishop's message of July 30 1993 congratulating the negotiators of the Arusha Agreement and appealing to the Banyarwanda to avoid any thing that could sabotage it. On the other side, Kangura's leading article in the same month calls for the unity of the Bahutu in the sub-region (Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Zaire, Burundi and Tanzania). It makes two other significant declarations, one that "Nous Républicains déclarons que Arusha ne sera appliqué excepté par la petite minorité qu'il avantage"; second, it announces the birth of the RTLM as "the fruit of the Bahutu unity with many thanks to the billionaire F. Kabuga".

⁶⁶³ Clements, K, "Africa Reflections 1995". A 17 pages reflection made after the visit to Rwanda June to July 1995. Collection of the author.

⁶⁶⁴ Sibomana, A (Father), interview given to Reporters sans Frontières in Rwanda: media de la haine ou presse démocratique. Rapport de mission. Paris: rapport de mission financée par l'Union Européenne. Septembre 1994, annexe 3,p 6.

⁶⁶⁵ In fact from its number eleven, Kangura had adopted a motto: "ijwi rigamije gukangura no kurengera rubanda nyamwinshi" (The voice that would awake and represent the majority of the nation). It claimed to be an agency who would help the legitimate services to identify the accomplices of Inkotanyi and to assist in the task of uncovering hidden arms and munitions. It declared that there was no "no ransom for the enemy" (nta mpongano y'umwanzi. The word *Ntampongano*(literally: no ransom for the enemy), later became later the name of a big nailed stick used by "Interahamwe" in the mass killings.

In Kinyamateka no 1399 of August 1993, the director, Father Sibomana signed the leading article criticising those who 'sing' reconciliation and still violate human rights, and never repent to seek for forgiveness for their deeds. In the second issue of August, Sibomana insists on the fact that much has still to be done to obtain from the rulers, freedom, civil rights and justice. Rwagahirima reported on the two days meeting organised in Kabgayi by bishop Thaddée Nsengiyumva for the youths from thirteen political parties. The deputy-editor of the Newspaper, the late S. Nkubiri commenting on the 60th anniversary of the newspapers complained that although the Newspaper has been "struggling for democracy and acting as the voice for the voiceless and the victims of violence", it had often been abandoned by its sponsors, the bishops. In the same month, Kangura issue 48, published the CDR (the extremist party)'s communiqué reiterating its rejection of the peace accord and what they called the impossibility of reconciling the Bahutu and Batutsi.

Kinyamateka no 1402, September 1993, recounted the Kabusunzu conference of journalists including a RPF delegation which reflected on the "role of the media in resolving the conflicts". The newspaper published a message from bishop Misago, chairman of the Commission on Peace and Justice urging the population to back the accord which for him was the "first step after the 1959 revolution in resolving Rwandan disputes". Meanwhile Kangura no 49 and 50 of October 1993 recalled the interviews given by the newly elected President of Burundi, M. Ndadaye who was urged to give to the Bahutu the privileges that were refused to them by the Batutsi. In addition, Kangura asked President Ndadaye to organise 'Arusha' (reference to the Tanzanian city where the inter-Rwandan peace talks took place) to rehabilitate the 'Palipehutu'- a political party considered by the Burundian authorities as extremist- as Habyarimana did for Inyenzi.

Kinyamateka no 1404 of October 1993 reported the death of President Ndadaye of Burundi and asked its readers not to weep for him but for their children and themselves because fear was occurring within the region where the murderers of Ndadaye and other dictators opposed democracy. The newspaper attacked the Burundian bishops for their misinterpretation of the death of Ndadaye when they attributed it to a small group within the army.

In the leading article of Kinyamateka no 1407, December 1993, Father Sibomana invited the grassroots to awaken so as to stop the 'carnage' of Rwanda which was looming, to save the country from destruction. The newspaper recounted the three day Mombasa Symposium in which the political forces, the RPF and the churches discussed "lasting peace in Rwanda"⁶⁶⁶. It also reported two other events the arrival in the capital for the 600 RPF troops and their officials and recounted the *Duharanre Amahoro* (Peace in Walking, ecumenical) peace rally on 1-1-1994.

⁶⁶⁶ With regard to the Burundi crisis and the Mombasa Symposium, the reader will refer to chapter VII, the Church in mediation.

At the same time, Kangura special no 52 December 1993 commented on the death of Ndadaye as salutary to the Bahutu because it exposed the 'demonic plan of the Batutsi' plotting to take power by force in Burundi and Rwanda. With regard to the arrival of the RPF troops ('Inyenzi') in Kigali, it called on the majority "who have been told what to do" to remain vigilant. In its issue no 55, January 1994, Kangura newspaper declared: "those who believe that the war is over have their eyes and ears for decoration. RPF has an army that can be fatal for the Bahutu".

These reporting point out two perspectives even a landmark between Kinyamateka and Kangura. On one side, Kinyamateka, though at moments seems to slip into pessimism and ambivalence, raises the awareness of the population to the forthcoming bloodshed events; it reported efforts being made to enhance peace and hope. On the other, Kangura clearly mobilised for widespread massacres. It seems from the point of view of this thesis that Kinyamateka's reporting, was not sufficiently relayed by moral forces while Kangura was relayed by large networks of extremist groups.

V.5.3. Cases of Isano and Gatenga Centres

Following the murder in early 1994 of some political personalities including Féléicien Gatabazi, leader of PSD and Minister of Public works and Energy from Butare (21 March 1994), the population of his region retaliated in lynching the CDR extremist party leader, Martin Bucyana in Butare (22 March 1994). Then Impuzamugambi - those who have the same goal- and Interahamwe- those who attack together- militia of the CDR and MRND retaliated in organising massacres in the city of Kigali and murdering more than a hundred civilians including some Church workers.

At that time, many people gathered in the Church centres including the Catholic youth Centre in Gatenga, and at a Presbyterian socio-pastoral centre, Isano, in Gikondo. Then RTLM broadcast several programs calling the two centres *indiri y'Inyenzi n'ibytso* (the bunkers of the cockroaches and accomplices). The social worker in charge of the AIDS programme in Isano centre, Mrs Margaret Mukandamage was hacked to pieces together with her husband and their six months old baby. The head of the centre, a Minister from Germany feared for the security of his family and left his residence in the compound for a safer lodging in the city. The silence of the hierarchies, both Catholic and Protestant to speak out against such an attack was felt by many Christians as an omission that left these centres at the mercy of these brutal killers. Duharanire Amahoro, a newly created ecumenical peace organisation sent a letter and delegations to both the Presidents of the Catholic Episcopal conference and the Protestant Council protesting against their absence of action against the continuing invitation from the RTLM to massacre innocents. The group received no reply.

V.6. Credible Media did Responsible Reporting But...

Having shown the occurrence of the virus of hatred in the extremist media, it must be made clear that considered in context, the global accusations that the NGO, human rights

organisations or political parties had failed to denounce the "chronicle of the genocide" seem to be somewhat exaggerated⁶⁶⁷. Apart from being handicapped by a harsh dictatorship, they lacked experience (their existence was only authorised in the June 10 1991 Constitution and then by the November 1991 law)⁶⁶⁸. From then on they produced a sum of joint declarations, letters, messages and reports which were repeatedly addressed to various authorities from the President of the Republic to the UN general secretary and western influential powers heads of states to denounce the campaign of violence. One Human rights Organisation, the ADL published two volumes of annual reports, 1991/2 and 1992/3 on appalling human rights violation in Rwanda, a meticulous daily record of every single violation in the land with visit on the ground, photographs and witnesses⁶⁶⁹.

Responsible media too did exist such as Kinyamateka, Imbaga and Dialogue and Rwanda Rushya (of the late André Kameya). Though, the latter was politically aligned and even adopted clearly an editorial line defending the Batutsi⁶⁷⁰, it would have good accounts of the burning issues of the day. This category of newspapers would analyse the motivation behind the massacres that preceded the 1994 tragedy. They did it with some achievement. In fact, it is when both the NGOs, the 'democrat' journalists and politicians as well as some diplomats combined their effort and put pressure on Habyarimana that he accepted the decision taken by the Prime Minister from the Opposition, Dr Nsengiyaremye, to sack the Director General of the Office of Information, F. Nahimana due to his responsibility in the March-April 1992 massacres of the Batutsi in the Bugesera area. But the light of hope soon switched off when the same Nahimana and many other barons of the entourage of Habyarimana, in 1993, launched the RTLM radio which started to broadcast in the following July⁶⁷¹.

According to JB. Nkuriyingoma, former Minister of Information in the first post-genocide government (July 1994-August 1995), the democratic media had denounced the genocide propaganda. Despite the intensity of state machinery against the 'democratic media' good accounts were written and published that made people aware of the political, economic and social crisis; they denounced the ethnic propaganda that consisted in creating further enmity between the 'Bahutu majority' and the 'Batutsi minority' (with the pretext of fighting the enemy, RPF). Although, many journalists of the democratic press worked in poor conditions, in risking their lives, they regularly reported various massacres of the target groups. Moreover, if the 'democratic media' had any achievement, it was because there was mutual

⁶⁶⁷ Chrétien & al, op. cit. p. 382.

⁶⁶⁸ Law on the Presse no 54/91 of 15 November 1991. See Reporters sans frontières, appendixes no 4.

⁶⁶⁹ September 1991 to September 1992: 354 and October 1992 to October 1993.

⁶⁷⁰ Nkuriyingoma, J.B. "Les media démocratiques avaient dénoncé la propagande génocidaire". In Dialogue no 190. Bruxelles: Avril-Mai 1996, pp. 151-153.

⁶⁷¹ Head of the Office of Information (ORINFOR) both Television, Audio-visual and Print media, this senior lecturer of history at the National University of Rwanda was entirely devoted to the Habyarimana regime. His doctoral thesis in Paris -VI University comprised congratulations to his 'friend', Jean-Pierre, one of the sons of the President. He inspired a group of intellectuals from the northern area of the President who were elaborating the Habyarimana's regime ideology in what he called: 'Umuganda ideology'. The thesis was published under the title: *Rwanda, Emergence d'un Etat*, Paris: l'Harmattan, 1993.

support between them and the civic society, human rights organisations and the "democratic political party members". Members of these organisations would help reporters to hide in what was known as the 'maquis' and they reported each single aggression against those tracked down by the regime⁶⁷². I have distinguished the tremendous work done by these young organisations, from the Church's failure to address ethically, politically, theologically and ecumenically the issue of ethnocide as a challenge to confront.

Not Enough to Challenge Ethnic Manipulation

Having shown how the RTLM and Kangura channelled the venom of genocide, it is best to look at how the MRND/CDR ideologies which sponsored these media manipulated and deprived the word of its primary meaning. In ideologies, suggests H.Thielicke, word degenerates. For the word draws its life from being first, a medium of confession. As such, it informs, thus relates to ultimate truth; it expresses judgement, thus relates to righteousness; and it gives shape, so it relates to ultimate being. Secondly, the word establishes and expresses - or put an end to - communication between persons⁶⁷³. When a word has lost its reference to norms and persons, and is no longer a medium of communication, then it becomes a power of suggestion, a smite; it becomes a slogan, proper for propaganda; it then ends in becoming a tool for depersonalisation and dehumanisation. Thielicke points out that ideologies are not controlled by men whereas truth controls men. A statement made in ideologies, he says, is not shaped by the truth, even if it resembles it, but proclaims a programme as a will to power⁶⁷⁴. The one who manipulates the word in ideologies captures the other and either, integrates them or destroys them as a hostile power. That is what the MRND/CDR system and their media were about. They integrated some of the leaders from the opposition⁶⁷⁵ who were applauded at length in political party rallies, for their virulent opposition to Habyarimana but who, from the late 1993 became close allies of the genocide ideology; they called on the feelings of the masses; then they slaughtered those who refused to adhere to their dreadful ideology.

V.7. An Agenda for Churches: Challenging Media

Churches have decided that media should constitute an important domain to help them evangelise the world; hence they cannot remain indifferent before the perversion and misuse of media made intentionally by evil people. Such a dehumanising and degrading of human

⁶⁷² See for example ADL, 1991/1992 report, pp. 133 protest against the "genocide" of the Bagogwe group (concept is from the international commission); denunciation and protest against the massacres of the Tutsi in Kibirira in October 1990 (109) and letters to the prime Minister and the Prefect of Gisenyi (129-131) protest against the massacres of Bugesera from the day following the outbreak (Guichoua, p.613) and the demand of inquiry on Burgomasters Rwanbuka of Kanzenze/Bugesera; Gatete/ Murambi; report on Mbogo massacres (267-275); City of Kigali in May 1992 (277); Bicumbi (280); see also defence in favour of imprisoned journalists, pp. 331-347.

⁶⁷³ Thielicke, H., op.cit. p. 48.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid. p.36.

⁶⁷⁵ These include J. Mugenzi, Mrs. A. Ntamabyariro and S. Mbonampeka, leaders of the P.L party, MM. Karamira, Murego and Kambanda, leaders of the MDR party.

beings process has been exposed in this work as the grave malady of the Rwandan media. These estranged human being from each other and reduced them to 'things'. It is best now to discuss alternative solutions to the existing approach in media based on the continuing polarisation of society.

V.7.1. Professionalism and Telling the Truth

Christian Ethics in communication, this author believes, requires honesty in persuasiveness and assessing the possibility of the impact of the reporting on the audience with freedom and responsibility. To be ethical, the media must not use falsehood, emotions, fabricated or distorted arguments or irrelevant appeals to divert the audience. A responsible journalism takes necessarily into account the use of the language in publishing reliable news presenting many different points of view. The insistence of the chief editor for example on rewriting any news that could cost lives and the elimination of deliberate bias, are of paramount importance. The option for caring journalism seems the best instrument for a profession that is part of the humanities.

The practice of journalism rests on another fundamental principle: telling the truth. Telling the truth so that people who have no access either to sources of information or to knowledge can be empowered to deliberate in private and public about the matters that concern their society. Important characteristics of truth-telling are honesty, perception, objectivity, integrity and professionalism.

If reporting the truth is at the heart of journalism, then, what took place in Rwanda with the RTLM and Kangura newspapers and suchlike was not journalism, but the fabrication of extremist groups in the process of spreading chaos and violence in order to monopolise power. For this particular reason, people of faith in Rwanda, especially Christians, as moral forces, are challenged by this word of the Gospel: "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free"(Jn 8,32). But how one can be sure that people know the truth so that they become free remain at the heart of these problematic issues.

The issue of communication in an ecclesial community must be given an attention so that all both the clergy and the faithful empower each other in challenging propaganda and lies in society. Henrici's analysis may be useful in any attempt to link an ethic of communications and the teaching of the Church. He suggests to relate both truth and power to three concepts: Word, Sacrament and Communion⁶⁷⁶. In Word, the communicator must remember that Jesus Christ is the message, the truth, the one who is life and the way. A reporter must be a person converted to the necessity of building up a community of faith and communion. Such a reporter knows that she/he counts and depends on God, the Father, through Jesus Christ to found the strength for telling and interpreting the stories and the daily realities in transparency (showing their sources and accepting human limitations). A reporter who is

⁶⁷⁶ Henrici,S.J.P., "Truth and Power in Ecclesial Communication". In Granfield,P.(ed), The Church and Communication. Communication, Culture and Theology, Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, 1996,pp.40-60.

persuaded that Jesus-Christ has broken the walls of separation and estrangement is able to avoid globalising and simplifying reporting.

Secondly, through Sacrament the minister empowers the community but is also empowered both in receiving and in sharing with the laity, the faithful in the word of God and through the sacraments. Such an interdependence develops a communion between the hierarchy and the loving generosity of the faithful. This analysis is important to Christian communities like Rwanda during the times of crises. Because violent groups may monopolise the public media and means of communications as part of their violent strategy to cling on power, both the clergy and the faithful must sit together, meditate the Word of God and find strength in the source of life through sacraments, sharing information, analyses and prospects. In this sense, the self-criticism of the Presbytery of the Kabgayi diocese and the commitment of the *Ukuri Kubaka igihugu* Group of EPR to be available in the case the Church hierarchy needed them to intervene in the crises and human rights violations were a clear genuine beginning of a Christian community determination to stand for the truth. The experience disappeared with the democratic process⁶⁷⁷.

V.7.2. Dialogue as Means of Communicating Faith

The establishment of a responsible journalism enables the liberation of society from the corrupt system. Okwuniba Nnoli suggests some practical solutions from which I draw for the re-establishment of a harmonious, caring journalism. First, to set up a clear policy, based on consistent and democratic principles, which is able to appraise each concrete question by removing inequalities, privileges and exclusiveness; second, to allow full rights such as equality of opportunity, justice and progress to all the population regardless of their social, ethnic and gender background; third, to establish the mechanisms of unambiguous demand for inter-ethnic unity of masses through a free dialogue with the diverse social and cultural organisations without state interference⁶⁷⁸.

Therefore, this thesis suggests that Christians be empowered to study the exploitation of the ethnic feelings by the media and corrupt politicians; to understand the relationship existing between mission and media, then initiate other alternatives based on mutual trust, transparency, love, faith and truth between the members of the community. Rwandan Christians will have to fundamentally reform the ecclesial monarchical form of communication which goes from top to bottom. They will also have to encourage all the sections of the community to fully participate, criticise, conceive and evaluate the ecclesial initiatives.

Such a process requires that be formed a questioning generation capable of challenging the authoritative approach to Christian teaching and the enslaving spirituality that focuses on minor sins (lying, stealing, adultery drunkenness) while omitting those horrific acts like racial

⁶⁷⁷ Diosèse de Kabgayi., *Convertissez-vous et Vivez en Paix*, Kabgayi, Décembre 1991; EPR, *Ukuri Kubaka Igihugu*, Kigali: Urwego, 1992. See chapter VI.

⁶⁷⁸ Okwunuba Nnoli., *Ethnic Politics in Africa*, Ibadan: Vantage Publishers, serie,no 1, 1989, pp76-77.

ideology which always ends in massacre of thousands. They will need to initiate a dialogue with the present and past teachings on ideologies as well as their history to detect and exorcise the mechanisms that led to the genocide.

To counteract a racial mobilisation, Christian communication must have some goals: first, promoting the belonging to Christ's identity over the clan's or ethnic group's identity; second, developing Christian teachings on the values of communicating for human dignity; third to establish the link between communication, mission, truth and the power of powerless; fourth, calling communities to repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation and tolerance. With these goals which need further discussion, Christian communication will sustain people's faith during the times of great national or worldly stress.

V.7.3. Resourcing Media Industry

In a pluralistic society, how can we address the issue of ethnic mobilisation? Would it be appropriate for the Churches to run their media industry? In other words can the ownership of the media industry (production and distribution of media products) be a way the Church can use to raise moral standards and make media leadership accountable for justice and righteousness in society? Referring to what he has called "Dealing with the media as a community of pagan people", Larry Poland⁶⁷⁹ dismisses such an idea. For him 'Christian media industry' has not proved dent in the power, values and content; they perpetuated irrelevant subculturally distinctive stereotypes of Christianity. In the USA, for example, 4 % of the population have been touched by Church media industry. In addition, Christian media have been involved in scandals and mismanagement which made them rather became ridiculous than helping to raise up moral standards.

While in western societies big multimedia companies with huge finances compete with Churches for the production and the distribution of media to secular societies less attracted by the Church activities, the Churches in Rwanda remain the sole institution interested in raising literacy and moral standards. Despite or perhaps because of the relatively high level of illiteracy and the low purchase capability, media industry can be a powerful tool in evangelism. This however will depends on the professional and skilful capacity to co-ordinate with other sectors. For example, rehabilitation, reconstruction and reconciliation conferences can be matters of production for media accounts and stories; in the future, remembrance and healing activities could constitute the source of stories of Christian mission.

As indicated by both Linden and Lemarchand newspapers, in particular Kinyamateka, canvassed for the 'revolution' in the 1950s and the transformation of Rwanda society⁶⁸⁰. This,

⁶⁷⁹ Poland, L., "Christ and Culture. The Christian and the Media". In Carson, D.A., *God in Culture*. pp.255-274.

⁶⁸⁰ See Linden, Ian, *Church and Revolution in Rwanda*, Manchester: Manchester University press, 1977, pp 230-247. Among other titles that served to propagate the reclamation for social justice were: a. *La voix du Congolais*, a small catholic magazine from Leopoldville; b. *L'ami*, designated for French-speaking Africans in Rwanda, Burundi and eastern Congo (some 1000 copies of which 400 distributed in Rwanda); c. *Servir*, of the brothers of Charity, designated to the alumni of the Groupe Scolaire of Astrida; d. *Kinyamateka* in Kinyarwanda. The reading of

it must be said, was part of a global strategy set up by the hierarchy to ensure the control of the ongoing changes as discussed in chapter three. It has been the spring board used by the Church to promote the ideas of the revolution in particular when, G.Kayibanda, the future President of independent Rwanda, was appointed its chief editor in early 1955. The latter attacked on the one hand, the conservative illiterate peasantry who blindly would have not easily given up their psychological dependence and the sense of inferiority which limited their creativity; and on the other, he attacked the ruling elite arrogance.⁶⁸¹

The intoxication of the population by violent state groups through media is a phenomenon the Church cannot ignore. Though the Churches have lost the monopoly compared to the pre-independence period, the media still are an instrument for evangelism, education and the forming of people's conscience. To surmount the propaganda, lies and rumours, Christians will have to equip its communicators to be able to produce good reporting and analyses but subsequently to exploit all the networks of relations and communication within the Church. In fact, if Kinyamateka's impact was minimal compared to the 1950s, it is not because it had no longer the monopoly but because in the 1990s, the Churches failed to take a leading line in raising the morals of society. If the hierarchy had been fully committed to justice and the rights of the oppressed, the voice of the voiceless, then, the 200 minutes of weekly programmes would have been a strong complement to good print reporting.

V.7.4. Equipping Committed Christian Professionals

In Les Autres Chrétiens Rwandais: Présence Protestante,⁶⁸² we dedicated a chapter to the challenge of the media in which we criticised the decline of quality and quantity in the various areas. We reminded people that despite the fact that the Churches had pioneered in the domain of media, in translating and printing the biblical texts, literacy material and newspapers, their aura had disappeared⁶⁸³. Ethnic mobilisation as the manifestation of a dehumanising system was not directly confronted. However, in the end two aspects were reflected in our study: questioning a dehumanising system and encouraging Churches to challenge the imbalance in the control of the techniques of information. In that sense, it was clear for us that Christian communication might question a system of information that transmits the orders of minorities and elites which ignore totally the needs of the oppressed and of victims. We invited the media to offer their microphones and columns to peasantry and working classes instead of leaving them under the monopoly of an elite whose corruption compromised the chances of the future of thousands⁶⁸⁴.

Kinyamateka became obligatory to catchiests and catholic teachers in after 1955. It rose from 22.000 copies in 1954 to 24.500 during the period, Gregoire Kayibanda (the future president of Rwanda) was appointed chief editor.

⁶⁸¹ Ibid. p.234.

⁶⁸² Gatwa, Th. & Karamaga ,A, Les Autres Chrétiens Rwandais. Présence Protestante, Kigali: urwego, 1990, p.116.

⁶⁸³ Ibid.p.117.

⁶⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 117/118.

Media, we suggested, were not tools to earn money or commodities, but the instruments of the Christian community on the one hand, to fulfil their social responsibility, and on the other, to manifest what the Church is about. Church media should help to bring the good news of liberation and deliverance to those threatened and abused by injustices, repression, marginality and victimisation. Christian communication, I suggested, must function both from bottom towards the top and from top to bottom. This principle suggests a combination of the listening and the teaching ecclesiologies. Church media should oppose whatever dehumanises or alienates human beings from being God's image bearers.

In dismissing the idea of having a Church media industry, Poland suggests instead a four points manifesto to evangelise the media world which I seem to be relevant but not incompatible to the existence of Church media: 1. a mobilising specific prayer for media leaders; 2. evangelising media professionals at every level; 3. equipping professionals in media for being good witnesses of the Gospel; 4. creating a network for the mobilisation of committed believers in media for significant spiritual impact⁶⁸⁵.

As we have seen there is no such thing as media establishment in Rwanda. The proliferating media were mainly set up as 'puppet journalism' for the destruction of the political enemies. But it must be added that these media proliferated to fulfil an ideological role whose older institutions such as the Churches, government, political parties, schools could or would not fulfil. In fact, there was a breakdown of values over several decades.

There is then a need to have good people to evangelise professionals; but above all these ought to be equipped to become a questioning generation which help society to emancipate from a blind obedience to authorities who have no democratic nor ethical ideals but madness. The Church people should be able and courageous enough to identify major manipulators of media and politics and general opinion and evangelise them. This will include helping Christian leaders to break the long moments of silence before the clamour of the persecuted, the imprisoned and the poor but to tell publicly, consistently and repetitively what the Gospel is about: Love, justice and solidarity with the victims of injustices and tyranny. This will reinforce the sense of belonging to a nation; it will involve restoring the social harmony and bring people to accept what the Church stands for.

⁶⁸⁵ Poland, *op.cit.* p. 274

CHAPTER VI: THE CHURCHES' RESPONSES

TO THE 1990'S CRISES

Introduction

The preceding chapter assessed diverse reasons which prevented the Church leaders from undertaking initiative to counteract the moral degradation and the human rights abuse in the period 1960 to 1990. From 1990, Rwanda entered a period of turmoil with a series of violent events. These included the failure of the regime to be in touch with the reality of the suffering population. The war started in October 1990 by the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) in the northern borders caused several thousand people to live as internal refugees. There was also increasing violence accompanied by political murders. The immaturity of the new opposition leaders, who were involved in internal quarrels and fractures, was coupled with the political blockage that prevented the implementation of the Peace Agreement. Lastly, the October 1993 military putsch attempt in Burundi in which President Ndadaye died. All these factors fuelled the 1990s crisis that led to the 1994 genocide.

In February 1992, both Roman Catholic and Protestant created a so-called "committee of Contacts of the Churches" to mediate in the crisis. Together with the Nairobi based All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), the Churches of Rwanda initiated contacts between the Rwanda Patriotic Front and the Rwandan Government. But as soon as the Christians leaders had brought the protagonists to the negotiating table, they withdrew, hence had little influence on the course as well as the political, moral and ethical implications of the outcome of the peace talks.

During the negotiations, the two antagonist groups, the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) and the then governmental army maintained a high intensity of suspicion that broke regularly into hostilities, while the former ruling party, the MRND and its allies, the CDR extremist political party, developed an anti-peace accord campaign.

When this thesis refers to mediation, it means many various efforts attempted to bring the belligerents into dialogue; it means also the process of education for non-violence and reconciliation which took place before the tragedy. The initiatives for dialogue include, many different circles in Europe and Africa, Church leaders and Christians at the grass-roots through a nascent non-violent movement. So the Churches were one actor among many others which rarely co-ordinated their efforts. This chapter investigates the content and the initiatives of Christians in developing a culture of peace at the grass-roots, the Churches leaders pastoral messages and political mediation as well the limitations.

VI. 1. Global Context of the Crisis

V.1.1. A Regime out of Touch with a Suffering Population

In the late 1980s the socio-economic situation had deteriorated considerably. In fact, traditionally Rwanda has been considered an agro- pastoral country⁶⁸⁶. The republican regime generated by the 1959 social revolution had distributed to the agriculturists the lands and pasture that belonged to the monarchical regime barons. The re-deployment on the new lands made possible the exploitation that prevented a dramatic food deficit. However, a national agriculture poll in 1984 showed that more than 50 % of the families lived on a piece of land estimated between 0,25 and 1 acre⁶⁸⁷.

Despite the initiation of a demographic programme, in particular the creation of the National Office of the Population, ONAPO in 1981, the growth of the population at 3,7 % per annum remained one of the major preoccupations⁶⁸⁸. With a surface of 26,338 square km, Rwanda was the most densely populated country on the Africa continent. The implications of such a rapid increase are considerable. For example, the demographic pressure led to the exploitation of the margin lands while the inheritance system requires a continuing cutting of the family land into pieces distributed to the male children. This contraction of the exploitation and the decline of productivity affected the environment⁶⁸⁹.

One of the serious consequence of the demographic explosion and the distribution of the pastures has been the gradual decrease of the cattle⁶⁹⁰. The most optimistic estimate the animal proteins available to cover the nutritional needs for the whole population at 50 %.

⁶⁸⁶ 95 % of the population live in rural area. The rate of urbanisation is one of the lowest: 5 % against 20 % in Kenya, 30 % Nigeria, 39 % Zaire, 48 % Zambia.

⁶⁸⁷ Actually the poll shows that:

6.8 % families exploited less than 0.25 acres.

18.2 % families exploited between 0.25 - 0,50

16.1 % " " " 0.50 - 0.75

15.9 % " " " 0.75 - 1.00

15.7 % " " " 1.00 - 1.50

11.00 % " " " 1.50 - 2.00

16.3 % " " " more than 2.00 acres

See Eripicum, R., and al, *Le Rwanda et maintenance*, Brussels: Coopibos/Fos/NCOS/ Vredeseilanden, 1990, p. 6.

⁶⁸⁸ According to the World Bank's 1986 report, Rwanda detained the world record in the synthetic index 8 children per woman. The population increased from 2.876.053 in 1962 to 4.831.527 in 1978 and would double from 7,4 millions in 1990 to 15 millions in 2010 even with the best hypothesis.

⁶⁸⁹ According to the *National Commission of Agriculture*, the surface needed to nurture an average family of 5 persons was estimated to 1 acre. On the level of Agriculture, 57 % of the population live under a chronic sub-alimentation. 43 % of the population possessed only 15 % of the land. In 1990 there were 1.11.897 families exploiting 1.250.00 acres. In such conditions more than 43 % of active labour was unused. The country had a deficit of 74 % of the production of fertilisers.

Gasana, J., *Rapport de la CNA (Commission Nationale d'Agriculture)*, *Résumé. Appuis a la Production Agricole*, Kigali, Avril 1991, p.1/2.

⁶⁹⁰ Gasana, *ibid.* p.9. The commission observed the increase of the other species (goats, sheep, pork, rabbits, poultry. However, their observed a animal proteins' malnutrition which risked to aggravate. In the minimal conditions, the daily animal proteins needed were 6 gr., the production o milk should have been of 147,000 tones, 60,000 tones of meat while the real production was: 64,000 tones of milk and 25,000 tones of meat corresponding to 3 gr. per day.

Regardless of the improvements in health conditions, life expectation remained at 50 years in 1985. More than 50 % of the children under 5 years suffered from malnutrition.

In the 1970s, the economics which depended mainly on the exportation of the coffee ⁶⁹¹knew a sustainable rate of growth with an average of 5 % due to the increases in the prices on the international market and a relatively prudent management which stabilised the finances and inflation. In the beginning of the 1980s however, there were signs of weakness resulting from the disadvantageous terms of world trade. In 1987, the fall in the international prices of coffee combined with bad climate conditions led to a deficit equivalent to 6,2 % of the GPI which increased to 10,7 % in 1987⁶⁹². To fund this deficit the government had to contract internal bank debts and to reduce by up to 20 % the price of a kg habitually paid to the producer during the coffee campaign of 1990/91.

Following this inability to pay the producers a reasonable price, the peasants began to dig up coffee plantations and quinine. Automatically the production fell and expanded the gap in the deficit of the public budget created by the collapse in 1985 of the mining sector which habitually would bring in 15 % of the income in exports⁶⁹³. This degradation of the economy impoverished the population and left thousands of young jobless persons to accept recruitment by the extremist groups for dirty jobs.

While the financial situation deteriorated due to the fall of the price of coffee- the major source of 'hard currency'- on the international market, the Breton-Wood Institutions imposed a drastic Structural Adjustment Programme. This forced the government to withdraw the subsidies to the coffee planters and to food supplied to secondary schools. The vulnerable populations in different regions were dramatically affected ⁶⁹⁴. At the same time, almost half of the country was undergoing famine, in particular in the southern prefectures. For a long time, the regime refused to recognise the reality and even condemned the independent media report till late 1989. At that time, on the eve of his visit to France, President Habyarimana made a public relations visit to Maraba (Butare), Karama (Gikongoro) and Bwakira (Kibuye) which he ended in 'blaming' the local authorities and the Intelligence Service for having failed to inform him of the disaster.

⁶⁹¹ The coffee represented 72 % of the income of exportation , tea (15 %). There were also pyrethrum, quinine and some mines.

⁶⁹² In 1990, the structure of the internal row product remained as 36 % from the primary sector (agriculture and mines), 24.5% from the secondary sector industry) and 39.5% from the territory.

⁶⁹³ World bank/IMF/ Republic of Rwanda., Document cadre de politique économique et financière a moyen terme (Structural Ajustement Programme). Kigali, Octobre 1990- Septembre 1993.

⁶⁹⁴ Marysse & al, Rwanda. *Appauvrissement et Ajustement Structurel*. Paris, l'Harmattan, 1994, pp. 48/49. In a survey carried out in the Kirambogo area with regard to the writing of this book comparing the consequences of the Structural Adjustment Programme in Mali and Rwanda, the authors show that in 1992 the income of the coffee producer growth was -0.36 in 1992 vis-à-vis 1990, and -1.92 for the agriculturalists. In 1992 the growth was - 5.72 for the coffee producers and -34.94 for the agriculturalists. In their conclusion, they argued that the Structural Adjustment programme never took into consideration the problem of poverty and cannot be an efficient means to stop it.

Compared to the chaos reigning in "Uganda of Idi Amin"; the "Tutsi apartheid of Burundi", the "bankruptcy of the Tanzanian Socialism" and the "cleptocratic dictatorship of Mobutu", the economic situation of Rwanda in the 1980s had remained relatively performing, commented once a German native, H.Keiner⁶⁹⁵. However, as Prunier accurately observed, underneath the surface, the ideological foundation of that regime was the Bahutu version of the Rwandan cultural mythology about the Hamite/Batutsi supremacy. Such an ideology provoked the violence of 1959 and 1964 and was still alive⁶⁹⁶. The social peace was kept at the price of financial fuelling of the elite; hence the deterioration of the financial situation was a major concern for the regime. All this rested on a mechanical hypocrisy, meticulously orchestrated and controlled by the regime with the Church hierarchy playing the role of engineer.

VI. 1.2. Moral Decline in Politics and Economics

Many different reports have described the increasing monopoly by the presidential family clique, the "akazu-family group"⁶⁹⁷, of the economy and the state companies which led almost to bankruptcy⁶⁹⁸. The moral decline was pictured by Gasimba in his 74 pages poem *Isiha Rusahuzi*⁶⁹⁹ (the mongoose looter). Gasimba portrayed the corruption and the egoism that characterised the MRND leaders. The poem describes how a mongoose looter dressed in millions of hard currency notes erupted in the hall where the MRND Central Committee and Government were holding a joint meeting. The participants under the chairmanship of *Father-Founder* and *Muvoma*⁷⁰⁰ struggled to explain the phenomenon, discoursed on how to recollect and to use the money. Each participant would ask the "Father of the Nation" that the money be allocated to their own department whilst army units were deployed on the borders with neighbouring countries to prevent the mongoose to escape with the money. *Isiha Rusahuzi* poem has probably no direct reference to ethnic mobilisation. It shows however the ascendancy of the divine ruler, Habyarimana, the sole master of the vessel, over the prevalent institutions, the army, the MRND and its offspring including the government and the Central Committee.

In this fiction, Gasimba described the "Father of the Nation" as the guarantee of serenity and confidence against the illness of the regime, corruption and political monolithism but who remained completely inefficient. What is behind the event of all the MRND tenors' meeting

⁶⁹⁵ Prunier, G., op.cit. p.97.

⁶⁹⁶ Prunier, G., Witness to the Belgian Parliament Commission, in Mahoux and Verhofstadt, op.cit. p. 80.

⁶⁹⁷ The *Akazu-group family* referred to the ancient monarchical court, the Akazu k'i bwami. Its descriptions was made by C. Mfizi, the former director of Information of Habyarimana, in his letter of resignation from the MRND. Guichaoua, op.cit. pp.617; 765. See also Lemarchand in Igwaro, O., *Ethnic Hatred: Genocide in Rwanda*, London: ASEN, 1995, p. 65; see also witnesses of Ambassador Johan Swinnen in Mahoux and Verhofstadt, op.cit. 257.

⁶⁹⁸ Gasana in Guichaoua, 1995.

⁶⁹⁹ Gasimba, F-X., *Isiha Rusahuzi*, Kigali: Printer set, 1987.

was an inefficiency in recouping the public funds from the intermingled politico-economical banditry. In fact, the link which Gasimba had implicitly in mind is that the criminals, the perpetrators and the executioners of violence were directly linked to the *akazu-family group*. Those responsible for the 1990 gorilla exhibition fiasco were the same who carried out several murders of political, religious, senior army officers; they were the same people who were responsible for drug and gorilla traffics, gold smuggling and the 'acts of genocide' against the Bagogwe, Bahima and other target groups⁷⁰¹.

In the same period, the regime faced a sharp international criticism referring notably to its continuing poor record in human rights which, as indicated above, and excellently analysed by Nicholas Gordon had an organic link between the corruption of the regime, the political murders and the entourage of the President⁷⁰².

VI. 1.3. Pressure for Political Reforms

From the end of the 1980s, a national and international pressure for political reforms generated the dynamics of freedom associated with politics, trade unionism and the freedom of speech. For the first time, the political parties were able to organise public manifestations which involved resistance to the regime's intimidation.

Actually, the opposition pressure followed the publication of a so-called "manifesto of 33 intellectuals" asking for a true democratic system founded on multi-party politics.⁷⁰³ This initiative was counter-attacked by the regime which, on the one hand, intimidated some of those involved and on the other, introduced what President Habyarimana called the *political aggiornamento*. On 21 September, the President appointed a so-called *Commission Nationale des Syntheses* assigned to undertake consultations and to propose changes within the ruling

⁷⁰⁰Muvoma or the simplification of MRND and nickname of its long-life serving General Secretary, Bonaventure Habimana.

⁷⁰¹Gordon, N., Op.cit. See also, ADL. op.cit. See also CLADHO: *Rapport de la Commission International sur les violations des Droits de l'Homme*, Octobre 1990 a Janvier 1993. Bruxelles and Kigali, Mars 1993.

⁷⁰²Gordon, N., *Murder in Mist*, Hodder, London 1993. Gordon arguably attributed the murder of Ms Fossey to Protais Zigiranyirazo, known as 'Z', brother - in - law of Habyarimana who was then Prefet of Ruhengeri. According to the author, the murder has connections with the international traffic of gorillas, arms, smuggled gold from Zaire and drug into which the Habyarimana family was involved in, with in particular, 150 acres of plantation of Indian hemp in the Nyungwe forest. The long list of the victims included political, army officers, journalist and religious independent figures: Father Silvio Sindambiwe, former director of Kinyamateka; M.P Fercula Nyiramutarambirwa, initiator of various Catholic charity foundations; S. Byabagamba, head of Roman Catholic programs on Radio-Rwanda stabbed in 1992 broad daylight time in his house by CDR militants; Brother F. Cardenal from Canada and Ms Antonia Locatelli from Italy assassinated by armed soldiers respectively in the Butamwa youth centre and in Bugesera in the middle of the Tutsi displaced by the organised violence, March 1992 by a commando of soldiers.

On the role of *Akazu-family group* in the political murders, see the accurate analysis of G. Prunier, *The Rwanda crisis. History of a genocide, 1959-1994*, pp 84-90. See also, on the traffic of arms, drugs, gorillas, Braeckman, C. *Rwanda, Histoire d'un genocide*, Paris: Hayez, 1994, pp. 104-109.

⁷⁰³Epicum, *Le Rwanda et Maintenant*, p. 33. The preparation and the publication of the manifesto in which the author of the present work was involved took several months in secrecy. Once published in the second half of 1990, the authors became targets of threats, particularly those among them suspected to have a plan of founding a political party.

party, the MRND⁷⁰⁴. However, this did not impress the population which rather responded to the opposition's mobilisation. In fact, the real motive behind the appointment of this totally MRND Commission, observers noticed, was to slow down the international criticism against the monolithic regime rather than to reform itself. All the appointees in the Commission including the clergymen, belonged to the ruling party. They failed to make radical proposals to resolve the crisis; in fact, they made no suggestion to modify the basic foundations of the anti-democratic system nor found a solution to the refugees' equation and its corollary, the RPF attack.

VI. 1.4. RPF's attack: Did the Regime Know?

Among the determinants of the 1990's crises, the war started by the RPF⁷⁰⁵ on the 1 October 1990 from Uganda indisputably occupies a basic position. The attack was conducted by some of the Rwandan refugees or their descendants who, as earlier said, settled in many foreign countries following the 1959 revolution and subsequent violent events. Those who lived in Uganda had acquired lengthy experience with the Ugandan army and rebellions in which they served local leaders in their power struggle. Indeed, out of 15000 NRA (National Resistance Army) soldiers who took power in Kampala in 1986 with Yoweri Museveni, almost four thousand were of Rwandan background⁷⁰⁶. Many of them held senior positions in the Ugandan administration and army⁷⁰⁷.

Many different hypotheses on the reasons behind the RPF attack have been advanced by analysts and the Habyarimana regime. One of these referred to the so-called Museveni (President of Uganda)'s plan to set up a *Bahima/ Tutsi* empire in the Great Lakes Africa region discussed in section IV.1. For the regime in Kigali, it was clear, the war was a manifestation of the undying attitude of domination among the Batutsi helped by Museveni and the former colonial ruler, Belgium.

The defenders of this official line founded their argument on the fact that a bilateral commission set up by Rwanda and Uganda assisted by the UN Refugee High commission was about to publish its first report, proposing how to resolve the refugee crisis. But according to the rebellion which displayed a political programme in eight points, the commission was another of the regime's strategy to delay their repatriation.

⁷⁰⁴Erpicum, op.cit. p. 36.

A Roman Catholic priest, Father (present-day bishop of Gikongoro diocese), Augustin Misago, Recteur of the Senior Seminar Nyakibanda and a Protestant Minister, Pastor Twagirayesu, president of the Presbyterian Church and Chair of the Protestant Council were appointed members of the Commission. According to credible sources in the hands of the authors, other Protestant leaders were associated with the Commission but did not want their names to appear publicly. These included the head of the Pentecost Church, Revd. J. Nsanzurwimo.

⁷⁰⁵ RPF: Rwanda Patriotic Front.

⁷⁰⁶Kamukama, op.cit. p. 41.

⁷⁰⁷Major-General Fred Rwigema, commander of RPF was Deputy- Defence Minister and commander of the NRA, as such, he was second to the president of Uganda, Museveni; Major Paul Kagame, who took over the RPF

The regime in Kigali continued to incriminate the *Inyenzi* (the 1960s monarchist rebels) putting the accent on the Khaddafi-Museveni-Bagaza (Tripoli- Kampala-Kigali-Bujumbura) axis so as to attract the sympathy of the Western countries. In fact, there existed a relation between the 1960's rebels (*inyenzi*) and the 1990s attackers (the RPF/Inkotanyi). The later were descendants of second or third generation of the 1959 refugees. Yet, there were major differences: at the beginning of the 1990s, the president of the historical UNAR, C.Rukeba, denounced the attack and stated that he still considered his party as the only representative of the refugees. He also reconfirmed the monarchist tendency of his party.⁷⁰⁸ On the reverse, the leaders of the RPF claimed to aim for the end of the 30 years stateless exile as well as to install a state of rights and democracy and declared a willingness to share power within the republican institutions.

According to René Lemarchand, the assumption, fed through rumour and self-induced optimism, was that the Habyarimana regime was a pushover, and would quickly collapse in the wake of the invasion". RPF grossly overestimated the strength of the internal opposition to Habyarimana; it did not anticipate the determination of hard-liners within government to manipulate ethnic hatred for political advantage; nor the massive military support that Habyarimana was to receive from France which saw in the attack an intolerable Anglo-Saxon threat to their *chasse gardée*; nor did they foresee the catalytic effect of the invasion on Bahutu solidarities⁷⁰⁹.

Gerard Prunier pursues the same line of thinking. He suggests that the determining factor of the attack was the information received in the movement from people who deserted the regime describing it as nearly collapsing. RPF then wanted to score in overthrowing the dictatorship. According to G.Prunier, some other elements precipitated the action: if the bilateral commission Rwanda-Uganda on refugees had presented a substantially acceptable report as announced, for the beginning of 1991, the RPF would have lost its support. Equally, the nascent internal democratic process risked weakening the rebellion's claim of being a spearhead in the fighting against the dictatorship. And lastly, the already unfavourable refugees' environment in Uganda was deteriorating⁷¹⁰.

Some analysts including Nsengiyaremye⁷¹¹ believe that the Kigali regime was fully informed of the attack. This line of reasoning is corroborated by some military analyses. Colonel

command after the death of Rwigema on the front in the early stages of the attack, was chief of intelligence of the Uganda Army; Peter Bunyenyezi who also died in the attack was commander of an army Brigade, and others.

⁷⁰⁸ Reyntjens, F., 1994, p. 149. King Kigeli V Ndahindurwa himself who live in exile in USA never approved the attack. According to credible sources, when he was still lived in Nairobi, Kenya, he was met in early beginning of the war by emissaries sent by the regime in Kigali who persuaded him to condemn the attack.

⁷⁰⁹ Lemarchand, R., "Rwanda: The Rationality of Genocide". In Igwara, O.(ed), *Ethnic Hatred: Genocide in Rwanda*, London: ASEN, 1995, pp 59-70, particularly p.61.

⁷¹⁰ Prunier, G., *Rwanda crisis 1959-1994. History of the genocide*, Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 1995, p.90/1.

⁷¹¹ Prime Minister of Rwanda of the so-called coalition government, April 1992 to April 1993.

Rusatira then Director of the Cabinet of President Habyarimana (the President was equally Minister of Defence), reflected on what he calls the 'war of the weak'. Rusatira brought together some elements which throw some serious supposition that the regime knew about the forthcoming attack. He analyses the history and the strategies of the masters in warfare tactics⁷¹² and concluded that Rwanda also had several guerrillas of 'Inyenzi' (considered as parents of the RPF) which failed to overthrow the regime.

He presents the causes of that failure as being, on one side, the fact that the attackers lacked cohesion, and on the other, the population inside the country was united. He then concludes that it would be a mistake for the country to naively rest on its laurels⁷¹³. This seems to indicate that some senior officials including colonel Rusatira, expected an attack at any time. This, however raises a question of knowing why the army was unprepared in such a way that the regime survived because of Mobutu's special army and the French's intervention.

Meanwhile, the Churches were surprised in their complicity with the regime for they never had sought to be concerned by the appalling refugee problem. In fact, as Lemarchand put it, the 'Hamite' frame of reference added yet another ominous dimension to the counter-revolutionary image protected by the invaders. This was the legacy of the missionary historiography evolving on the speculation about the cultural affinities between Hamites and Coptic Christianity to political dogma about the Ethiopian origin of the Tutsi referred to as 'feudo-Hamitic' by the hard-liners⁷¹⁴.

The Church leaders rushed to "extinguish the fire"; they walked in the beaten paths of the positions taken by the government, sending awkward messages in different directions to rescue the regime. The meeting in which the Church leaders met the refugees for the first time in 30 years was held in Nairobi in August 1991 under the sponsorship of the All Africa Conference of Churches. Representatives of refugees, Churches, a delegate of the Rwandan presidency and representatives of the rebellion, debated their respective role in the crisis opened by the attack⁷¹⁵.

However, with the illusion of having stopped, even crushed the attack, the Kigali regime, instead of seeking a negotiated solution, adopted a hard-line position that ended in considerable loss of human and material resources. Among other factors that certainly influenced the hard-line position of Kigali was the Burundi crisis.

⁷¹²Including the Chinese Lu sun Tzu, and his disciple Mao Zedong, the Belgian Henri Bernard, the Austrian Karl von Clausewitz, the Sudanese Col. Garang and the Ugandan, Yoweri Museveni. Rusatira

⁷¹³Rusatira, L., *L'armée pourquoi faire?* Kigali : Pallotti presse, October 1989.

⁷¹⁴Lemarchand, R., 1995, P.61.

⁷¹⁵See joint report of the Catholic and Protestant delegations of August 1991. The conference met in Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi, 17 to 21 August 1991. The participants who met the RPF delegation came from the Protestant Churches, the Protestant Council; the Catholic Church ; a representative of the Rwandan President's office.

VI. 1.5. THE Burundi Crisis

The history and politics, in the twin countries, in particular the syndrome of violence, has had a mutual influence on the internal politics of one side and the other of the river Akanyaru (natural border). As described in Chapter Five, the fragile political equilibrium in Burundi collapsed with the murder on 21 October 1993 of the first democratically elected President, Melchior Ndadaye (who happened to be of a Bahutu background). He was assassinated together with several other members of his government by a Tutsi dominated army. This nurtured Rwanda extremism in the former ruling party, the MRND and its allies of the CDR as well as the dissidents from other political parties.

In fact, as shown in chapter one and three, the mutual influence of Rwanda and Burundi on each other's political developments go back to the colonial period and particularly to the years of the revolution. For Lemarchand, the 1959 Rwanda revolution nurtured the predictions of the Bahutu and the fears of the Batutsi elite, in Burundi, particularly through the vast community of the Rwandan Batutsi refugees who arrived between 1959 and 1964⁷¹⁶. Unlike Rwanda, in Burundi the victorious political party during the September 1961 elections, the UPRONA was, 'ethnically' mixed. Unfortunately, its leader, Prince L. Rwagasore - a Ganwa (royal family probably of Bahutu origin) prince married to a Hutu girl - was assassinated one month after the elections. On independence in 1962, the two countries which were ruled under a centralised colonial administration, split into two political units; Rwanda adopted a republican regime led by the Bahutu majority while Burundi remained a monarchy under the predominant Batutsi aristocracy and up to 1966 when the army took power and proclaimed the Republic.

The syndrome of violence in the two countries as we have said, has had enormous consequences on both sides. The 1959 social revolution, the 1964 and 1972/3 massacres of Batutsi in Rwanda, the selected massacres of 1990s; and lastly the 1994 genocide were each time felt as national catastrophes in Burundi. Lemarchand's study indicates that these events caused the deterioration of the ethnic relations in Burundi to a considerable degree⁷¹⁷. On the other side, tragic events in Burundi including the 1965/1966 massacres, the 1972 "acts of genocide" against the Bahutu⁷¹⁸, the 1988 massacres of Ntega and Marangara, and most

⁷¹⁶Lemarchand, R., *Burundi, discourse and ethnocide*. Cambridge: Cambridge university Press, 1996.

⁷¹⁷Ibidem. p.

⁷¹⁸Mbonimpa, M., *Hutu, Tutsi, Twa. Pour une Société sans Caste au Burundi*. Paris: L'harmattan, 1993.

Mbonimpa argues that the castes in Burundi were not a colonial creation, but of the Tutsi feeling of a natural ambition to dominate has been the source of the Bahutu tragedies in which at least 200,000 people mostly 'Hutu' were killed and more than 300,000 made refugees during the 1972 'genocide'.

According to Lemarchand, op. cit. p. in 1988, the Ntega and Marangara tragedy made 30,000 victims (5,000 according to official statistics) and 60,000 refugees. The 6 April 1994 the successor of Ndadaye, Cyprian Ntaryamira was killed together with the president of Rwanda.

dramatically, the 1993 murder of President Ndadaye had fuelled the predictions of the Rwanda extremists⁷¹⁹. In both cases the Church leaders failed to speak for the truth, justice and the victims of the cynical murders. Writing on the 1972 genocide of the Bahutu in Burundi, Hastings says that "at no point did the bishops criticise the actions of government or suggest that the Bahutu uprising was a consequence of the intolerable injustice to which the majority in the country was being subjected"⁷²⁰.

Similarly, the international community dramatically omitted to speak out. The US ambassador to Burundi in 1972, Thomas Melady, left in the midst of the horror to take another appointment in Kampala. His personal account of the horror is a kind of secret diplomacy in which he affirms that US did more than other Western Powers towards Captain Micombero's regime and the OAU. There was however, no real impact of that 'effort'⁷²¹. The silence of the international community vis-à-vis the suffering of the Bahutu in Burundi had resuscitated among their counterparts in Rwanda the memories of the pre-independence oppression⁷²². As Prof. Reyntjens rightly said the death of President Ndadaye had probably initiated the death of the Arusha Agreement in Rwanda. It made some among the moderate Bahutu doubt, and gave the extremists arguments to pursue their blockage with the pretext that no-one can have confidence in the RPF and by extension, the Batutsi⁷²³.

VI. 1.6. New Opposition : Fragile and Immature

The new opposition was born in the second half of 1991. Most of the political leaders aimed at challenging the dictatorship in various sectors including the violation of human rights.

P. Melady, former ambassador of USA during the 1972 tragedy estimates the victims at 80,000 to 150,000. He gives two reasons for the permanent crises of Burundi: fear and the 1959 Rwandan social revolution that brought refugees and nourished the pretext for further massacres.

⁷¹⁹Tutsi dominated support for the Rwanda Tutsi extremists and giving the massacres of Hutu in Burundi as reason to slaughter the Rwandan Tutsi for the Hutu extremists. In 1972 during the massacres of the Bahutu organised by the Micombero regime, the open confrontation between Kigali and Bujumbura were about to end in war. The Kayibanda government accused Micombero's Tutsi-Hima regime of exterminating the Bahutu/Bantu people and emotionally called upon Mobutu, from Bantu like the later to intervene in their side. The crisis between the two countries stopped when Major-General Habyarimana seized power and then normalised the relations with his counterpart, Captain Micombero without questioning the massacres of the population in Burundi. He needed the regional support to consolidate his illegitimate act.

⁷²⁰Hastings, A, *A History of African Christianity*, 1950-1975, p.200.

⁷²¹Melady, T, *Burundi the Tragic Years*. Maryknoll/NY: Orbis books, 1974. His failure to manifest a public concern about Burundi and through him, the US says Lemarchand is appalling. Lemarchand, R, *Burundi, ethnic conflict and genocide*. Cambridge & Wilson: Cambridge University Press & Woodrow Wilson International Center, 1966, p. XXVII.

⁷²²The campaign of what became known as 'Hutu power' ideology was launched on October 23th 1993 during the rally called for the solidarity with the Hutu of Burundi after the assassination of President Ndadaye. A businessman, Froduald Karamira, vice-president of the MDR dissident faction played a key role through his inflammatory speech claiming repetitively slogans 'Hutu Power'. The 'Hutu Power' group was a coalition made of the MRND/CDR extremist parties and dissidents from other political parties. They had no official platform, except a virulent anti-Tutsi hatred and the rejection of power sharing, the core of the Arusha Agreement.

⁷²³Reyntjens, F., Witness to Commission Parlementaire Belge sur les Evénements Tragiques du Rwanda, le 14 Mai 1997. In Mahoux and Verhofstadt, op.cit., pp. 126-129. Reyntjens is however not right to consider the refusal of the Tutsi to participate in the Nyamirambo manifestation, 23 October 1995 as a refusal to be in solidarity with the Burundi people. In fact many Bahutu too refused to participate to this gathering which was called by the hard-liners of the MRND/CDR and other dissidents within the opposition parties to launch the 'Hutu Power Ideology'.

Realising their weakness before a 20 years old dictatorship, they grouped under the 'Committee of Concertations'⁷²⁴ from late 1991. They defined their objectives among others: to eradicate the pillars of dictatorship; to negotiate the end of the war and to work for the 'National Conference' during which the population would address the burning issues such as the inter-ethnic relations, regionalism, injustice and human rights abuse⁷²⁵.

The 'Committee of Concertations' of political parties carried out several actions, such as denouncing organised massacres and pressuring for peace talks as well as the forming of a multi-party government. However, in the second half of 1993, the unity of the opposition disintegrated due to a combination of factors, in particular the absence of a strong alternative political leadership to counterbalance the monolithic system.

In fact, from 1973 the Batutsi and the Bahutu from the south were subject to frustrations, bullying and discrimination. The nascent multi-party system did little to improve the relationships between the native of the two sub-cultures: "the northerners and the southerners". Instead of initiating political forces, with leaders credible enough to challenge a corrupt and authoritarian regime, the political parties were formed by people much more interested in revenge against their former allies in the state-party⁷²⁶.

The second challenge to the opposition came from the MRND/Akazu. The latter installed an 'armada' designed to spread violence, intimidation and fears and succeeded in overturning the political discourse against the nascent moderate opposition, accusing them of being the puppets of the rebellion.

The third difficulty of the opposition resulted from its frustrating alliance with the RPF⁷²⁷. In the perspective of implementing the peace accord, the RPF never stopped exerting pressure against the government army. On 7 February, 1993 RPF attacked the government held positions in Ruhengeri, Byumba and Rulindo in retaliation to the massacres of the population of Batutsi background in Gisenyi and Ruhengeri by the regime whilst the peace talks were in process. There is a sense that in organising the massacres of the population, the MRND block arrived at their aim of putting the opposition in a dilemma: they were accused of supporting a RPF which shoot at the population in its retaliation.

Hence some milieus of the opposition were affected by fears of not knowing what was behind the RPF calculations. In fact, the opposition was overshadowed by both the Habyarimana and R.P.F camps who then became the two major poles of power interfering constantly in the

⁷²⁴ The 'Comite des Concertations' of the Opposition was made of four major opposition parties: MDR: Mouvement Démocratique Républicain; P.L: Parti Libéral; PSD: Parti Social Démocrate and PDC: Parti Démocrate Chrétien and several small parties.

⁷²⁵ Nsengiyaremye in Guichaoua, p. 251.

⁷²⁶ Nkunuzumwami, op.cit., p, 184.

⁷²⁷ Though there was no formal plat-form between the opposition and the RPF, officials of both camps would assert that their primal common aim was to remove the dictatorial regime of Habyarimana.

internal organisation and affairs of the political allies. Fourth, the climate was additionally polluted by the leaders of the main opposition parties, the MDR and the PL quarrelling among themselves for power and positions in the forthcoming government of post-negotiations. The disunity of the opposition fractured the democratic enterprise and left the ground to the extremists. The virus of disunity also infected the UN peace contingent. Both the UN civilians and soldiers divided into two camps, the pro-Habyarimana, and the pro-opposition⁷²⁸.

VI. 1.7. The Despair of the Displaced People

The outbreak of the conflict that followed the December 1992 and January 1993 massacres of civilians of Batutsi background in the Ruhengeri and Gisenyi provoked the RPF retaliation. The number of displaced people increased from 350.000 to almost a 1 million whose conditions gradually deteriorated. First the camps in which they were sheltered were regularly attacked by the belligerents who would disperse the occupants. Second, the humanitarian organisations faced the disruption of stocks due to the obstruction of the supply routes from Kampala, Uganda⁷²⁹. People had to wait for several days to receive 4 KGs of beans and maize allocated for 10 days. The life in the camps continued to degenerate. For example, in early 1993, 80.000 persons lived in the Nyacyonga camp, 15 km from Kigali. In mid March 1993, 600 huts were burned with the animals and belongings.

The population of the camps were held as hostages for political purpose. They were subjected to propaganda from both sides in view to confuse them on who has the responsibility of their trouble⁷³⁰. When in August 1993, the A. Uwiringiyimana's⁷³¹ Cabinet

⁷²⁸ Confidence made to the author by the Vatican Ambassador, Mgr Bertello, in an informal conversation, in early 1994. See also Nshimiyimana, V, *Prélude du génocide. Enquête sur les circonstances politiques et militaires du meurtre du Président Habyarimana*. Bruxelles: Editions Quorum, 1995. Nshimiyimana, then journalist attached to the MINUAR (the UN contingent) asserts that the contingent itself was divided in two camps. On the one hand a camp close to Boh-Boh (Camerounian, UN general Secretary special civil envoy) known for his sympathy with Habyarimana and another close to General Dallaire (Canadian, Commandant of the troops) accused of sympathy with the RPF.

⁷²⁹ For unknown reasons, most of the humanitarian organisations, UNHCR, World Food Program (WFP), Red Cross held their stocks in Kampala, Uganda.

⁷³⁰ Meanwhile, in politics, president Habyarimana continued to blow hot and cold. After attempting unsuccessfully to suspend the activities of political parties with the pretext of allowing the administration to plan for reconciliation, he resigned from the presidency of his party, the MRND in March 1993. This followed the publication in Brussels of the report of an international commission on the abuse of Human rights accusing him, his family and his party, the MRND with its Interahamwe militia, of being behind the organised massacres.

On 3 March 1993, the two co-chairpersons of the *Committee of Contacts* of the Churches met with the President of RPF, col. A. Kanyarengwe in Bujumbura where he had just ended his meeting with the leaders of four major opposition parties. Following these talks, the Prime Minister of Rwanda, D. Nengiyaremye met the RPF leader in Dar-es-Salem 4 to 7 March 1993 and they signed a joint declaration resolving to resume the negotiations. At the end of the term of the Nsengiyaremye Cabinet, on April 16th Mrs Agathe Uwiringiyimana took over.

⁷³¹ From the MDR opposition party like her predecessor, Mrs Uwiringiyimana was proposed by the chairman of the Party, F. Twagiramungu but opposed by the hard-liner's faction headed by the two vice-presidents: Karamira and Nsengiyaremye and the Executive Secretary, Dr D. Murego. In a subsequent meeting of the hard-liner fraction of her party in which she accepted to meet the delegates, in Kabusunzu/Kigali, June 1993 Mrs Uwiringiyimana was sequestered and forced to resign as Prime Minister in favour of the candidate of the hard-liners, J. Kambanda; her trouble ended in being forced by her own camp to withdraw her resignation the following morning.

which had succeeded to the Nsengiyaremye's concluded the General Peace Agreement with the RPF, then the displaced population returned to their farms without waiting for an order from the authorities. Their hope for a peaceful life was again extinguished by the April 1994 tragedy.

VI. 1.8 The French and Belgian Flavour in the Tragedy

French military and civil aid, in particular the presence of its troops in Rwanda has been in the centre of the dispute between the block RPF-Opposition on one hand, and on the other the Habyarimana system. It is believed that the unconditional French military and diplomatic aid to President J.Habyarimana made the two camps harden their positions in the peace negotiations. The French troops beside the government army brought Habyarimana and the extremists of his regime to resist the idea of power sharing, the leitmotiv of the Arusha Peace Accord while the RPF and opposition insisted on their repatriation.

France was neither in Zaire nor in Rwanda and Burundi when those countries recovered their independence from Belgium in 1960 and 1962. For F-X Verschave, it replaced the former colonial power through business, commercial and economic interests, francophony, personal relations and its internal politics⁷³². France, Verschave argues, participated directly in the genocide alongside the Habyarimana machinery. French officers trained and equipped the army, the Interahamwe militia and the Presidential Guard elements on Mobutu's and Eyadema's style from January 1991 to the end of 1993. It provided economic, political and international diplomatic support to the Habyarimana regime (and to its extension, the interim government: April to June 1994), before, during and after the genocide though it is believed that President Mitterrand himself fully knew that widespread massacres were under preparation⁷³³.

But why France insisted to stay in Rwanda? George Moose considers that France, for the West, plays a gendarme role to preserve Western interests in Africa⁷³⁴. To understand the accent being put on the French presence in this research, it is best to consider how Habyarimana came to power and how France's interference between 1990 and 1994 became a factor of internal politics never addressed by the Church's mediation.

⁷³² Verschave, F-X., *Complicité de Génocide? La Politique Française au Rwanda*. Paris: Découvertes, 1994, pp. 10ff.

⁷³³ Chipman considers that in addition to the factors proper to its internal politics, France pursues three major objectives: military defence, French cultural and linguistic, political and economical influence. See Chipman, J., *French power in Africa*. Cambridge, Massachussets: Basil Blackwell: 198.

⁷³⁴ According to George Moose, a former US Under Secretary of State for Africa in the Clinton Administration, France represents and extends the global and historical hegemony of the Western powers on the Africa continent. For him the great powers attribute to Africa five traditional major roles: an obstacle against Islam and Communism; sea-lines for the protection of the commercial goods; the launching pad; the strategic resource store land and finally the material and human resources reserves; and finally, Africa fulfils the surrogate field role. According to Moose, during the first war 188.000 African men fight beside France and Britain mobilised 470.000 during the second war of whom 100.000 for its Burma campaign. Moose, G, "The French Military Policy in

In fact, Habyarimana's military putsch in 1973 was officially presented as the result of a power struggle between the centre and the north. However, below the surface, it must be remembered that the putsch happened when the Kayibanda's regime turned to the Chinese and its African ally, Tanzania, to initiate socialism⁷³⁵. A year after his putsch, Habyarimana was integrated into the 'syndicate' of the head of the French speaking countries through the OCAM (a Common Organisation for Africa and Madagascar) of which, he took the chairmanship from the poet, author and philosopher Léopold-Sedar Senghor, then President of Senegal⁷³⁶.

Then in 1975 France signed with Rwanda a convention for military co-operation. It was under that accord that more than 500 French soldiers were sent in Rwanda after the RPF attack; this contingent was even increased up to 750 men and they stayed during the crisis. They were constantly referred to by the opposition as backing Habyarimana in repressing the opposition; both French and Habyarimana camps were unhappy when they had to withdraw to leave the ground to UNAMIR in December 1993. According to Jean Carbonare, a French member of an International Commission on Human rights abuse mentioned earlier, French officers were present in many military barracks like Bigogwe (Gisenyi-Ruhengeri region), Gako in Bugesera, Gabiro in Mutara. where many Tutsi and opponents were convoyed, tortured and killed⁷³⁷.

Earlier in 1992, France detached Lt Colonel Chollet who then was appointed to a new but key position as "Councillor of the supreme chief of armies" (President Habyarimana) for the "organisation of the defence and the functioning of the military institution"⁷³⁸. It is because this project was interpreted and denounced by the opposition as a support aiming to strangle the democratic process that the French officer's nomination was suspended⁷³⁹.

When, in June 1994, the defeat of the genocidal government became obvious, France organised the 'Turquoise' to rescue the whole machinery of the regime, including the army and the interahamwe militia in a so-called 'natural vocation' in the 'French-speaking countries'⁷⁴⁰. This brought the organisation, "Observatoire Permanent of French Co-

Africa". In Foltz, J& Bienen, H, S. (ed.). Arms and the Africa. Military influences on Africa's international relations. Yale University Press. New Haven/ London: 1985.

⁷³⁵ At the time all the curriculum of moral and civic education in schools focused on Tanzania and Chinese socialism. French presence and disturbance on the Africa continent is also often interpreted vis-à-vis its historical rivalries with the Anglo-Saxon world known as the Fachoda syndrome, Verschave, p. 6.

⁷³⁶ Unusually for a foreigner, from early 1980s, ls. Senghor was elected member of the French Academy.

⁷³⁷ Ibid., p. 22; see also Verschave, op.cit. pp. 37-3.

⁷³⁸ Verschave, op.cit. p.40.

⁷³⁹ Verschave, p.114-117. In April France set up a system of arms' supply and assistance to commandment from Paris. Several tones of arms were sent via Goma in Zaire. France sought for an international backing and had to elaborate its own mandate from UN. The time it get it in midst of June it was too late to save the interim government but it succeeded to protect its departure in exile through the so-called 'zone humanitaire neutre' in the western prefectures of Kibuye, Gikongoro and Cyangugu, border with Zaire.

⁷⁴⁰ Although, France claimed a disputable number of rescues, 10.000 Tutsi! (which is not our argument since we praise God for even one life rescued), various authors including Verschave and Braeckman identify rather other

operation", to say accurately that in protecting the militaro-political system, author and executor of the genocide, France has nipped the democratic renewal in the bud ⁷⁴¹.

At the opposite extreme, Belgium was the target of the Bahutu hard-liners. Because it immediately withdrew its citizens and repatriated its troops at the beginning of the war, in October 1990, the former colonial power was accused of having plotted the putsch against the regime to pay its bill to the Batutsi whom it abandoned in the 1950s/1960s. The litany of accusations included the refusal of the Belgian Government to deliver arms to Kigali which were ordered and paid before the attack of the RPF (a charge not denied by the Belgian government). The suspicion over Belgian intention mounted over its decision to provide the UN Peace keeping force (the most significant contingent, 600 men out of 2500) needed to implement the Arusha Peace Agreement perceived by the barons of the regime as anti-Habyarimana. The hard-liners thus pursued their campaign, presenting the Belgian UN troops as an occupation force designed to offer power to RPF and the opposition ⁷⁴².

VI. 1.9 Dictatorship and Aspirations to Democracy.

The former ruling party, the MRND and its president were forced to open society to democracy and dialogue with the rebellion; they were forced to liberalise political and economic sectors. Obviously, they gave on one hand what they wanted to take on the other. As he called himself *Ikinani* (the Invincible), Habyarimana left no doubt about his determination to fight to the last bullet. Nicholas Gordon has described the situation as follows:

The war had forced this on the president. Now that the FPR had formed a well-equipped and highly undisciplined army capable of taking and looting Ruhengeri, and now that the balance of world politics had shifted away from the cold war, the president had been forced to make concessions. Multi-party politics were allowed, a semblance of democracy took root in the country, and news-papers, most of them critical of the regime, started to flourish. Opposition politicians were given cabinet portfolios, not the crucial posts like Minister of the Interior or Defence, but even so, it appeared that there was no way that this president was going to be able to stifle the spirit of reform. ⁷⁴³

As Gordon indicates, it was a mixture of events, both nationally and internationally including the 1990 war, the stream of re-democratisation on the continent following the end of the Cold War, the rise of a more questioning Civil Society and opposition which led the President to accept changes in the Constitution to allow political parties to exist outside the MRND. He made some concessions but at the same time, put underway the mechanisms for sabotaging the democratic process as earlier discussed in chapter four. In fact, from the very beginning

objectives: first, to rehabilitate Mobutu, thus to reassure French speaking 'friend leaders'. Second, to re-exercise their influence - in the framework of Fachoda syndrome- for the control of the plateau of Maniema rich in strategic mineral resources. Third, a televisual show around the exodus of refugees to be able to brandish the humanitarian crisis with hundred deaths of cholera so as to hide its responsibility in the tragedy. Cf. Verschave, op.cit. p.137; Braeckman, op.cit. and Obs. Perm. Coop. Fr. p.50ff.

⁷⁴¹ Observatoire Permanent de la cooperation francaise, op. cit. p. 5.

⁷⁴² Mahoux and Verhofstadt, op.cit. pp.312 f.

⁷⁴³ Gordon. N., *Murder in mist*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1993, p.1

of the war, Habyarimana and his entourage have feared to be isolated by an alliance between the RPF and the internal opposition leading to a wider coalition of the marginalised Bahutu of the centre, south and east.

His entourage then decided to exacerbate ethnic tensions to reinforce their position with the help of the population; this was also a strategy to hide other problems created by 20 years of the regime such as political murders and economic corruption. The repetitive character of the massacres relayed by ceaseless accusations about alleged arm caches held by the Batutsi and the attacks by the Inkotanyi against the military barracks, all this inflamed the social climate and increased fear of the population⁷⁴⁴.

And A. des Forges rightly said : "après chaque massacre, des excuses officielles étaient présentées, on assurait que les attaques n'étaient que le résultat d'une colère spontanée et que les autorités locales étaient débordées. En résumé, le génocide était le fait d'un peuple littéralement terrorisé qui ne faisait que se défendre"⁷⁴⁵.

Far from being an isolated incident, the 1990 crisis was linked to interwoven political, military, social, religious contexts created by the rupture of society out of the legacy of the past in which foreign powers, nationals and expatriate elite had participated. Nkunzumwami accurately describes this episode as follows:

Le Rwanda a traversé des séries de ruptures socio-politiques qui ont marqué des fractures sociales. Du royaume autonome à la colonisation allemande, avec l'introduction d'une dimension économique et culturelle à l'image de l'occident, notamment avec l'aide de l'église Catholique; de la colonisation Allemande à l'intrusion des belges avec leur plan de purification ethnique dans l'appareil du pouvoir monarchique, conduisant aux conflits ouverts entre des Bahutu écartés de tous les pouvoirs et les Batutsi occupant tous les postes de responsabilité dans tous les secteurs; de la colonisation Belge à la République Ruandaise, avec d'horribles massacres accompagnant la révolution socio-politique de 1959-1961; une dernière rupture tragique de 1990-1994, accompagnée d'une guerre civile pour le pouvoir, des massacres et du génocide, les Rwandais sont complètement désorientés aujourd'hui. Le seul lien entre les Bahutu, les Batutsi et les générations futures, - c'est-à-dire l'identité nationale Rwandaise, la culture et l'histoire communes-, est alors remplacé par des luttes régionalistes d'hégémonie engendrant des micro-cultures. La haine ethnique est devenue une arme contre l'identité nationale pour tous. Quelques intellectuels Rwandais et étrangers, profitant de leur notoriété universitaire, amplifient cette haine par des vagues explications sur les origines diverses et les pratiques ancestrales des Bahutu et des Batutsi au Rwanda. Ils nient violemment l'identité culturelle nationale Rwandaise que les Rwandais eux-mêmes ont totalement intégré dans leur vie quotidienne et dans leurs échanges⁷⁴⁶.

This sharp analysis identifies the key moments in the development of the fracture of Rwandan society: the westernising of society and the organisation of the monopoly for the Batutsi elite with the help of the Church; the massacres which accompanied the 1959-1961 social revolution; then the 1990-1992 tragic events. Except during the 1990s crisis in which the Rwandan Church hierarchies and Christians were requested to mediate, the elite of the

⁷⁴⁴ See section V.3.2.4. In many occasions, during the Umuganda weekly manual activities, the population was regularly called on to find caches of arms and to dislodge accomplices hiding among their neighbourhoods. This created a climate of suspicion: at various occasions, crowds reacted hysterically at rumours and misinformation on which nobody was allowed to conduct serious inquiry

⁷⁴⁵ Des Forges, A. Witness of 26/2/1997 to the Belgian Parliament, Brussels, 1997, p. 25.

⁷⁴⁶ Nkunzumwami, E, op. cit. p.231.

Churches has been not beside the poor and oppressed but beside the holders of political power.

The issue here is how the theology of the Churches of Rwanda could have been a prophetic voice, a mediator between the weak and voiceless and the powerful, the decision-makers? 'Theology', says D.Forrester, "must point steadily towards individual responsibility. Political, economic, scientific and strategic decisions are made and implemented by men and women, and affect men and women. Neither the market with its 'invisible hand' nor the state should be revered as powers following their own principles and effectively beyond human control"⁷⁴⁷.

But what kind of Christian commitment was needed in mediation? It is best to underline the fact that the Churches in the 1990's were comprised of three tendencies: the first group was made up of Christians struggling to inform national and international opinion of the suffering of the people; a second tendency was made of what Violet⁷⁴⁸ calls the 'refugees of heaven', indifferent to the socio-political fractures and conflicts as they only care for their ticket to heaven; and lastly the hierarchy imprisoned in the 'ethnic divide', working either to acquire or to preserve a political endorsement. There was a special category made of external interventionists, the 'Prayer-breakfast' group.

VI. 2. Responses of the Churches to the Crises

As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, during the period of turmoil which intensified in 1990 and after, the intervention of the Church hierarchies had consisted of the pastorals and messages largely advertised and distributed in the parishes for the Roman Catholic Church⁷⁴⁹ and within the Protestant Churches some letters reacting to the outside inquiries. When the war broke out in the north, Protestant joined their Catholic colleagues and made an attempt to mediate in the crisis. However that attempt, it seems from the perspective of this thesis was not founded on any sustainable reflection with regard to the root causes, the socio-historical and political developments and the theological implications of that crisis. This explains why some forms of the Church leaders' intervention was perceived by observers as a reflex of self-preservation.

VI. 2.1. Catholic Hierarchy: disseminating the State Message

There has been three major categories of the messages of the Catholic bishops. Firstly, the messages published prior to the pope's visit, 7-9 September 1990 and focused on unity. Secondly, the messages which responded to the emergency raised by the beginning of the

⁷⁴⁷ Forrester, D., 1988, p. 16.

⁷⁴⁸ Nyirarukundo, V., *Informal discussions*, Kigali, March 19

⁷⁴⁹ In our study, we have used the booklets of the message printed by Pallotti Presse, Kigali, in French and Kinyarwanda. We have adopted the list published by the Secretariat of the Bishops's Conference, "Lettres et Messages des Evêques Catholiques du Rwanda depuis la guerre dite 'd'Octobre 1990' (1990-1993)". In *Bulletin de la Conférence Catholique du Rwanda*. No 2/Mars, 1994, p.1.

war, 1 October 1990. Thirdly, other messages various letters and joint intervention with their counter-parts, Protestants.

In the first message, February 1990, **Christ our unity**, the bishops evoked the question of unity among Rwandans, referring to the myth of the common origin of the Banyarwanda, they wrote: "We learned, from our ancestors that Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa were all descendants of a same ancestor, Kanyarwanda. The Church for its part had never ceased to preach the unity and the good understanding between the children of God, even if they were ethnically, ideologically and religiously different"⁷⁵⁰.

The myth of brotherhood between Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa has been undermined at various epochs. In endorsing publicly the 'ethnic and regionalist' balance policies with an attempt to minimise its negative impact on those discriminated against, the hierarchy failed to call the nation-state to assume the exigency of unity and well-being for all. Clearly, their public support to the MRND policies was unequivocal:

On entend parfois des gens se plaindre que, pour des raisons d'origine ethnique, on leur a refusé un emploi ou une place à l'école, on les a privés d'un avantage, ou que la justice n' a pas été impartiale à leur égard. vous n'ignorez pas que la politique de l'équilibre ethnique sur les lieux de travail et dans les écoles est destinée à corriger cette inégalité qui a pu favoriser les uns au détriment des autres. Les dirigeants font leur possible pour aider les habitants du Rwanda à bien s'entendre: ils nous donnent des routes, des journaux, toutes sortes de lieux de rencontre, les institutions du MRND, les associations des travailleurs et celles de la promotion féminine⁷⁵¹.

The negative impact of these policies whether in the public or confessional schools has been debated in Chapter Four. The fact that the hierarchy felt it necessary to publicly bring their support to the regime, shows simply how far they were from the reality of the common people. The second message, May 1990 concerned, "Christ our unity, as the foundation of Justice for every Human". For the bishops, the struggle for development was inseparable from Justice and the respect for fundamental human rights. For that very reason the bishops congratulated the Rwanda government which "did not hesitate to sign the UN Declaration of Human rights and work hard to implement it"... in such a way that, "Rwanda in Africa is a state of Rights which try, in loyalty, to apply the laws meticulously studied"⁷⁵².

The bishops made also some more meaningless remarks on what they considered as obstacles to Justice such as "banditry, family planning; lies and the absence of truth in media; the prisoners whose presumption of innocence was not respected; the mismanagement of public spending including the illicit transfer of funds outside; the crisis in education attributable to

⁷⁵⁰ Conférence des Evêques Catholiques, Christ Notre Unité. Première Partie: Unité. Kigali: Pallotti Presse, Avril, 1990, p.5.

⁷⁵¹ Ibid. p.5/6; p. 1.

⁷⁵² Conférence des Evêques Catholiques, Christ notre Unité, Deuxième Partie: Justice pour tout Homme. Kigali: Pallotti Presse, Mai 1990, p.3.

families and teachers; the accumulation of land"⁷⁵³. The text was a litany of moral instructions in imperative form without edifying stories of personal engagement:

don't sell the services or employment; don't reserve them for the members of your family, your friends, or members of your ethnic group, your region or the richer. Be strong against the viruses such as dishonesty, corruption, favouritism, nepotism. It is in that way we make appeal to your vigilance during the preparation of the visit of Pope, Jean-Paul II.

The third message was published on the 15 August under the title: "Christ, our unity as foundation of the word of God in the life of a Christian". It introduced a number of initiatives for the promotion of the first Catholic version of the Bible in Kinyarwanda which was expected to arrive from Spain where it had been printed. The Bishops admitted their shame for not having a Kinyarwanda version of the Bible whilst the Protestants (numerically one third of the Catholics) had a NT from 1931 and the whole Bible from 1957⁷⁵⁴. The bishops insisted on the prominent role of the magisterium, the Pope and the bishops in the interpretation of the Bible "because they represent the apostles"⁷⁵⁵.

In conclusion, the aim of the 1990 category of messages was, for the bishops, to advertise the Pope's visit, "he in whom is the link that unites the people of God and the Church, One and indivisible of which the Christ is the Head". They were equally keen to save their face against all the criticism about the tensions and divisions within the Church and its complacency vis-à-vis the regime. They referred to human rights but kept a blackout on the mass killings and assassinations that affected the country, at the very heart of the Church.

Second, there was a feeling that the hierarchy was struggling hard to rehabilitate its moral and spiritual authority undermined by the publicity surrounding Kibeho's "apparitions of the Virgin Mary" among schools and unschooled pupils who then started to interpret the Scriptures and Church's teachings and attracted thousands of pilgrims. In the end, they failed to spiritually and theologically interpret the elements of the crisis past and those announced by the visionaries⁷⁵⁶.

VI. 2.1.1. Against the War, for the Status Quo

The second category of the Roman Catholic bishops' messages concerned their reaction against the RPF attack. They sent letters to some of the colleagues of the Episcopal conferences and published pastoral messages largely distributed and read in the Churches. In these messages, the bishops focused on the issues of truth (May 1991); Reconciliation (New Year 1992); the conditions for peace: Truth, Justice and Love (Advent 1993). They

⁷⁵³ It left open the charge against the Church, 'the far largest landowner in the land'. Mbonimana's study shows that the average of parish properties in 1930 was over 200 acres per parish.

⁷⁵⁴ Surprisingly the bishops made no reference to the painful and long common project initiated in 1981 by the Bible society of Rwanda between Protestants and Catholics for the translation of the Bible in Kinyarwanda which had been repetitively delayed by the absence of stability of the Catholic nominees in the translation team. Bishop Perraudin, then archbishop of Kabgayi, head of the Commission on Bible and Liturgy repeatedly made clear to the Bible Society that they were ashamed for the failure to offer a proper version to their churchgoers.

⁷⁵⁵ Conférence des Évêques Catholiques, *Kristu, Bumwe Bwacu. Igice cya gatatu: Ijambo ry'Imana mu mibereho y'umukristu*, Kigali: Pallotti press, 1990, p. 1.

introduced a number of burning issues without however analysing the real roots nor proposing a solution. There were two exceptions to this, the Kabgayi diocese and the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda reflections to which we will come back later.

In their reflection, the bishops expressed their anxiety about the deterioration of unity and peace, the greatest achievements of the Habyarimana regime. For them the mounting ethnic tensions, the abuse of human rights and the organised violence in the country were the logical consequence of a population, keen to stop the reinstallation of the monarchy that represented the attackers, the Rwanda Patriotic Front. On 7 November 1990 in the message "Heureux les artisans de la paix, car ils seront appelés fils de Dieu" (Mt. 5,9), they emphasised the unity being undermined by the attack and the 'enemy's infiltration' as follows:

Comme chacun le sait, le 1er Octobre dernier, dans la région du Nord en Préfecture de Byumba, notre cher Pays a été victime d'une agression armée venue de l'Uganda, et d'infiltrations complices à l'intérieur du Pays jusque dans la capitale Kigali. Cette épreuve soulève à nouveau le problème des réfugiés et remet douloureusement en question l'unité nationale⁷⁵⁷.

The bishops appealed to the population of each category and gender to show a Christian solidarity, understanding and tolerance. They invited the population to avoid ethnic and regionalist oppositions that could lead to civil war. They condemned vengeance, denunciation, slanders, looting, the burning of habitations and murders. However, the unfortunate association in this letter, of the aggression from the north and the 'infiltration of accomplices inside the country' (which was not proved) espoused the discourse used in the propaganda of the regime to justify the arrests, tortures and even killings of potential opponents, 10,000 of them were languishing in prisons without any charge. The time chosen by the bishops to make their public declaration was the same as the local government organised massacres in Kibirira region (Gisenyi) which left more than 500 dead (ADL). Yet, the hierarchy omitted to make any reference but rather congratulated the authorities for keeping the population calm:

Malgré les écarts et les complicités qui ont été détectés à l'intérieur du pays, nous nous félicitons de l'esprit de cohésion qui caractérise le comportement de notre peuple des le début des événements qui affectent notre pays⁷⁵⁸.

The leitmotiv in the November 1990 message was the pacification of the country. The bishops searched for it by any means and at all costs. First, they called Christians, population, youth, intellectuals, functionaries, and priests to be loyal to the authorities and to the bishops. Furthermore, there was a sense that the faults of the regime were being put in the future as errors to avoid; giving the impression that the authorities were totally free from any mistake. This was particularly transparent in their letter of 5 December 1990 to their colleagues in France:

⁷⁵⁶ Maindrion, G., *Les apparitions à Kibeho*. Paris: QE.I.L., 1984.

⁷⁵⁷ Conférence des Evêques Catholiques, *Heureux les Artisans de la Paix, car ils Seront Appelés fils de Dieu*. Kigali: Pallotti Presse/ Secrétariat de la Conférence Episcopale, Novembre 1990.

⁷⁵⁸ Ibid. p. p.

Rwanda has been attacked by refugees and Uganda soldiers. Apart from loss of human lives, the whole region is sacked. The union between the ethnic groups and the regions is checked. A campaign of misinformation has been meticulously organised by the attackers to tarnish the image of the country. The country faced the ambitions of a feudal and monarchical group determined to reinstate a regime ejected by 80 % of the population⁷⁵⁹..

The bishops suggested that the refugees problem can be resolved on the condition that, Rwanda, a small land overwhelmed by its population be assisted and that the refugees dissociated themselves from the "suicidal group. Like many major organs of the MRND system, the discourse of Church hierarchy denounces the campaign of misinformation against the regime, and the dislocation of the unity between the 'ethnic groups'. The bishops evoked the attack as the feudo-monarchists' plan to reinstate "a regime rejected by 80 % of the population". The problem of the refugees referred to in the message however raised the question whether the Church hierarchies did not omit deliberately, or because of political pressure to speak out in favour of them. What is certain however, is that this continuing link between the causes of the 1959 revolution, the reclamations of the refugees and the 1990's rebellion does not serve the unity among the Banyarwanda. It was instead an implicit discourse scape-goating some sections of the population.

Reacting to the message, the Switzerland based Rwandan community, mainly refugees, blamed the Catholic hierarchy for defending a mysterious "unity realised by Habyarimana while most of people were excluded from participating, like millions outside the country". They accused the Church of compromise with a 'corrupt regime' which murdered many including Church workers and clergy; they annexed the Kangura' 10 commandments and accused the bishops of adopting 'Hitler's ideology'. The group dismissed the argument of overpopulation advanced by the Catholic hierarchy in naming some small countries of much bigger density, Porto Rico, Barbade, Guadeloupe which resolved their demographic problems without exiling their populations⁷⁶⁰.

In the message of 2 March 1991, entitled "As I have loved you, so you must love one another"(Jn 13,34), the bishops discussed four themes: Reconciliation; Dialogue intra-Rwandan on different levels; Peace and Solidarity. They singled out some categories like the authorities, politicians, army forces, religious people, intellectuals, parents and educators, media and gave them specific instructions to work for peace and to choose Justice over the abuse of power and wealth. In the end they indirectly evoked in a single line what they considered as human dignity with reference to the refugees issue: "without ignoring the rights

⁷⁵⁹ Roman Catholic Episcopal Conference, Kigali. Letter of 5 December 1990 to their colleagues of France Collection and Translation of the present author.

⁷⁶⁰ Communauté Rwandaise de Suisse, Lettre du 14.2.1991 a la Conférence Episcopale du Rwanda in reaction to their letter of 5 December 1990 to their colleagues of France. Collection of the present author.

of our brethren, the refugees"; and called "to their brethren to stop fighting and seek dialogue"⁷⁶¹.

On March 31 1991, the pastoral message⁷⁶² focused on the forthcoming multiparty politics which Christians were encouraged to embrace so as to work for "truth, tolerance, and to oppose the oppression of political parties that disturb justice and peace". The bishops remembered the pitfalls of the multiparty political experience prior to independence and invited Christians to behave responsibly in a new political and democratic system⁷⁶³. Most of the text quoted the encyclical letter of pope John Paul II that addressed the monopoly of power by a minority; human rights and justice for all, the role of the state and the laity. Referring to article 285.3 and 287, 1 & 2 of the Canon law, they reminded the clergy and other religious members not to participate in politics nor to have any role in the structures of a political party, organisation or syndicate though they were encouraged to "pursue constructive political thoughts and plans"⁷⁶⁴.

This reflection was an exciting introduction to the issue of the relation existing between Church, Christians, clergy and politics. It arrived in a fertile period of political changes. There was much to say about all the propaganda of the established single ruling party which linked multiparty politics with the war, the ethnic divide and treason. Many of the people suspected of planning the formation of political parties were intimidated, even assassinated to the indifference of the Church hierarchy. There was equally much to say about the new political forces which were disturbing the population without proposing concrete project of building up society. Yet, the bishops' message was quite silent on those issues.

VI. 2.1.2. Ubwiyunge Mbere ya Byose⁷⁶⁵

This was the message of the New Year, 1992. The Bishops asked the government and the Rwanda Patriotic Front to put an end to the war and repatriate the refugees. In return, the refugees were urged to recognise that the history of the country had not stopped during their exile. The political parties were called to form a transitional government to prepare to give political direction to the country, to prepare the elections, reconcile people and to organise the National Conference if requested by the population.

⁷⁶¹ Conférence des évêques Catholiques, Mukundane nkuko nabakunze (Yh 13,34), Kigali: Pallotti Presse/Secrétariat de la Conférence Episcopale, 1991, p.12/1.

⁷⁶² Conférence des évêques, Ukuri kuzabaha kwigenga (Jn 8,32). Kigali, 199

⁷⁶³ Ibid. p.

⁷⁶⁴ Ibid. p.14, paragraph 23 & 2

⁷⁶⁵ Ubwiyunge Mbere ya byose: Reconciliation before everything; Umusaserdoti, Umuhanya wa Kristu: the priest, witness of Chris

Umusaserdoti, Umuhamya wa Kristu⁷⁶⁶

This message was published in September 1992. It reflected on the 75th anniversary of the priesthood in Rwanda - the first two Rwandan priests, Donat Leberaho, and Balthazar Gafuku were ordained on 7 October 1917- the bishops recalled the meaning of jubilee in the Jewish tradition: the prisoners must be liberated, the oppressed released (Leviticus 25.8-17). They then reported what they considered as extraordinary expansion of the Church though there was still a long way to go to contextualise Rwandan Christianity⁷⁶⁷.

our liturgy still is imported; one would say that Christianity and Rwandese culture are two irreconcilable things; many Rwandans have not yet heard of the Gospel and even those baptised were not really converted: some go to the mass and after are involved in killings of their neighbours, looting and other acts of hatred and of violence⁷⁶⁸.

The Priest in a new Rwanda, according to the bishops, must be responsible for the sanctification of others, a witness of the mystery of God. He would have to proclaim the truth, to condemn injustices and to publicly defend human rights. The content of the message refers to some aspects of the December 1991 Kabgayi diocese document discussed in section VI. 3.1. which strongly criticised the absence of a prophetic role of the Church and invited it to convert to remain truthful to the Gospel. This unusual move highlights the exigency of serenity and commitment needed for the priest to face the challenges of a society where violence becomes widespread.

Yet, once again, the Church hierarchy omitted to pay tribute to those among the clergy and lay people have been assassinated for their courage to speak out the truth. Nor was evoked the withdrawal of the candidature of Father F. Muvala to be ordained bishop two days before the event, an incident considered by many as ethnically motivated⁷⁶⁹. In the end, there was no vision that could help to discover the meaning of the jubilee in the Rwanda society at the time minority was clinging on power through manipulation of all form of frustrations of the population.

VI. 2.1.3. Inzira y'Amahoro: Ukuri, Ubutabera n'Urukundo⁷⁷⁰

The last message assessed in this series was published in Advent 1993. The bishops called for a new Rwandan society in which the Peace Accord would be implemented. The accord was presented by the hierarchy as the beginning of a new era demanding from all, mutual respect, tolerance and forgiveness. They invited the population to overcome egoism, thirst for

⁷⁶⁶ Translation: The Clergyman, Witness of Christ in Today Rwanda. Conférence des évêques catholiques, *Umusaserdoti, umuhamya wa Kristu mu Rwanda rw'iki gihe*. Kigali: Pallotti Presse/Secrétariat des évêques, September 199.

⁷⁶⁷ Starting in 1900 in Save, the Church was implanted in all the regions of the country three years later. From the first baptism in 1901, it had 15000 Christians in 1917, and 3,099,609 Christians through 123 parishes in 1991; 90 religious congregations, inferior seminars in Kansi, Kabgayi, Nyundo, Rwesero, Butare, Zaza, Ndera and Nkumba; and superior seminars in Rutongo (Propeudetic), Kabgayi (Philosophy) and Nyakibanda (Theology).

⁷⁶⁸ Ibid. p.

⁷⁶⁹ See interview with Father Muzungu in chapter V

⁷⁷⁰ Translation: The Path of Peace: Truth, Justice and Love. Message of Advent, 1993.

power, lies, arrogance, rancour and killings. Peace was described as being generated by justice, the very fundamental right for life, education, employment, expression of opinion and religious freedom.

Due to the fact that Rwanda was a country torn apart, reconstruction needed courage, repentance and forgiveness. A particular word was addressed to every category of population including the "magistrates who would heal the illnesses of suspicion and mismanagement"⁷⁷¹ the army forces who "would be open to integrating with the rebels' troops and to accepting the demobilisation of some of their colleagues". The rest of the message were moralising and peremptory admonitions to the soldiers the refugees, politicians, journalists⁷⁷².

Published at the crucial period of the political blockage, the message tackled some relevant issues. Yet, it omitted to mention some fundamental issues like repentance for the collective and institutional sin of discrimination and exclusion, violence and massacres that affected the history of the country.

Kierkegaard characterises the Churches' presence in each society which accurately applies to the Rwandan situation. For him each commitment of the Church that does not please the authorities arouses marginalisation, persecution, rejection. A reverse situation occurs when the Church lives in peace within the established order, when it lives in the sphere of power, and can not formulate a direct message against evil. In that case, the Church has ceased to be the salt in the world, Christianity is reduced to folklore⁷⁷³.

Like Kierkegaard, André Dumas has described three situations into which the Church could find itself in any society⁷⁷⁴. First, Church and state are in "symphony" through a mutual co-operation. Consequently, this Church is not free in its movements and acts. Second, the Church is free and keeps the temporal power to the laity. The danger here is marginalisation because any position of the Church remains private. Third, the confessing Church always questions its own deeds and those of political power. Such a Church is actively persecuted; but that is to remind Christians that it is not right to rest on their laurels.

In Rwanda, due to various mutual convergences discussed in Chapter Four, there was, on one hand fidelity and harmony with the state policies, and on the other, a competition among Church leaders for obtaining donations or favour from the state. Some have found in this competition one of the causes of the total absence of criticism against the unjust policies.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid. p. 1.

⁷⁷² The case of the soldiers needed tactful approach. According to the Peace accord, the majority of them were to be demobilised. A small number of 19000 for both the army and the gendarmerie was to be kept. Many felt they have been abused by the politicians who recruited them to be killed into a war of an intra- Rwandan before those who survived would be left unemployed.

⁷⁷³ Kierkegaard, S. *Training in Christianity*. London:SCM,194.

⁷⁷⁴ Dumas, A., *Political Theology and the spiritual life of the Church*. Paris: Chollet, 197.

But if the Church leaders were comfortably installed in complacency why did they publish the message? Firstly, the hierarchy had certainly a sense of history. As it happened in the end of the 1950s during the stream of independence on the African continent pushed by the Non-Aligned Movement and the eastern block during the Cold War, there was, in the 1980s and early 1990s a strong stream of re-democratisation following the end of the Cold War. Once again, the hierarchy was keen to adapt so as to remain the major partner of the political power.

Secondly, it must be remembered that during the period of political and social changes in Africa some Church leaders were called to lead the *National Conferences* which were seen as a forum to gather all the home forces in the task of creating a better future. In Rwanda, the 1990 crisis left the Church as the only institution that had the necessary means to intervene. The Catholic bishops struggled to make their voice heard through their pastoral letters. Instead they became a sort of loudspeaker of the regime. At the same time, some Protestant leaders were suspected to take stance that would make them eligible to play a key role in the National Conference which was being evoked in the national opinion. Both camps enrolled in the game without a theological and ethical preparation.

VI. 2.2. Protestant Hierarchy: Seduced by State Misinformation

The attitude of the Protestant Churches towards the 1990 crises, in particular, the RPF attack, bore the lack of a theological reflection as well as a coherent methodological approach in addressing burning public issues. As seen before, the RPF attack was followed by massive repression of the civilian population. In general their reactions consisted of explaining governmental policies in condemning the 'irreducible monarchists' who started the war.

Responding to the 10 October, 1990 World Council of Churches General Secretary's fax in which, Dr E. Castro expressed to the Protestant Council of Rwanda his "concern about the repression against the refugees returning to their country", the Church leaders regretted that "the information currently published on Rwanda, was deformed, distorted by badly intentioned people, thus false"⁷⁷⁵. They rejected the idea of a civil war or mass of refugees returning as well as any human rights violation. They rather located the refugees problem in the "pre-colonial period, in the power struggle within the monarchical ruling families; in the colonial period when many fled to avoid forced labour ; in the abuse of power by the ruling class during the monarchical era; and finally to the 1959-1961 social revolution which ended 400 years of a feudal system tolerated by the two successive colonial administrations"⁷⁷⁶.

⁷⁷⁵ CPR, Letter of 17 October 1990 to the heads of states of Rwanda, France, Belgium neighbouring countries to Rwanda, UN and OAU General secretaries, the Embassies in Kigali, other Churches in Rwanda and neighbouring countries.

⁷⁷⁶ CPR, "Appel des Eglises Protestantes à ceux qui sont Engagés dans la Guerre du Rwanda. Kigali, 17 October 1990. Archives of the Author.

For Protestants, the arrival of Habyarimana to power opened an era of unity, peace and of participation of all 'ethnic' and religious groups. The Church leaders then reiterated their support of government policy concerning the refugee problem. They took the opportunity to reveal the January 1989 results of a regional Conference on refugee called by the All Africa Conference in Nairobi. They ended by asking neighbouring countries to cease backing the 'attackers'⁷⁷⁸.

The Protestant theological seminary also got engaged in the polemic. In a reaction to the WCC general secretary's letter (which was published in SOEPI, a WCC bulletin) mentioned above, the academic staff of the Protestant Faculty of Theology in Butare regretted that he was 'wrongly informed'... For them, the attackers wanted to reinstate the monarchy. They provoked fighting on 4 October 1990 in the capital, Kigali and elsewhere. A government commission, they said, was touring the world to counterbalance misinformation⁷⁷⁹. Nevertheless, the WCC persistently requested more information about "disturbing news of summary trials, executions and arrests"⁷⁸⁰. Having obtained little co-operation from the Church hierarchy, the director of CCI/WCC in his letter of 30 January 1991 communicated the 'vigorous protests' to the President of the Republic regarding the "arbitrary arrests, tortures and deaths of the detained". A particular case of Canon A. Cyafubire, former secretary of the Kigali Anglican Diocese, then director of a secondary school in Gahini, who was killed by the security detectives in the Rwanagana prison, was mentioned. The WCC then requested that the detained be either released or brought to justice. According to credible sources, none among Cyafubire's hierarchical superiors felt challenged to pursue the case before the Rwandan authorities.

The Church hierarchy managed to visit the prisoners, meet the chairman of the ad-hoc Commission due to charge or to release those detained, General Prosecutor, A.M. Nkubito as well as the Minister of Justice, T.Mujyanama. At the time, the Church leaders were still convinced that the major step needed was to help the government overcome the aggression from Uganda and to appease the international negative campaigning. In the first letter ever written to their counterparts of Uganda, the Protestant leaders invited them to approach President Museveni to ask him to cease any support he was giving to the RPF/Inkotanyi.

The Protestant hierarchy then seized the occasion to congratulate the Ugandan Churches for the hospitality extended to the Rwandan refugees. They regretted that the attack happened

⁷⁷⁸ CPR, "Appel des Eglises Protestantes" Kigali, October 1990. Collection of the author.

⁷⁷⁹ Faculty of Theology academic staff, open letter to the General Secretary of WCC, 21 November 1990 in reaction to his letter of 12 October 1990 to the president and General Secretary of CPR, published in SOEPI No 33. Collection of the author.

⁷⁸⁰ Clement Janda, fax of 13 December 1990.

whilst a bilateral commission on refugees as about to find the solution⁷⁸¹. According to credible source, the letter was never answered.

Once more, the RPF exploited these arguments to dismiss the eventual neutral stance of the authors. For the Swiss based Rwandan Community, the authors of the messages, particularly the Faculty of Theology were defending the "apartheid regime of Kigali" which gave them unmerited privileges through the "ethnic and regionalist equilibrium" policy. Clearly, the earlier position of the Church leaders was misinformed by government propaganda. The absence of any genuine programme in the area of human rights as well as the fact that they had made no previous contact with the refugees made their position look like a speculative advocacy of a discriminatory regime.

The absence of clear stance from the Protestants may find its manifestation in the stamping of the Christian Council in mediocrity. As a body that should have empowered the Church members to adapt to social changes the Council "excelled by its lack of initiative" and of maturity in addressing national burning issues. In 1991 a commission was appointed to propose a reflection concerning the guidelines for the Council's engagement in society. The report, called the "prophetic role of the Protestant Council" was presented by the commission to the Church leaders. But the members of the commission clashed with Church leaders. Most of the critical aspects of the paper with regard to the Church absence of clear stance in the social matters were rejected. Rather, the members of the commission were accused of failing to reflect on issues that were relevant to the Churches like evangelism, 'sheep fishing', education⁷⁸².

In February 1992, the Protestant Council organised another workshop in Gihindamuyaga Monastery called: the "CPR and its perspectives of development". Participants including Church leaders, the CPR and Churches staff spent three days with some externals reflecting and trying to define the content of the mission of the Council in a changing Rwanda. For them, there was much to do with the search for unity among Church members; to help the Churches adapt on the national level to the universal experience of ecumenism, justice and peace, diakonia and human rights issues through a concrete commitment. The conference drew up a proposed job description for each department of the Council and suggested the necessary link and procedures for co-operation between the Council, the Churches and Society.

As the meeting took place during a period of growing violence and political blockage, the participants proposed the creation of a new desk for human rights, justice and peace. The

⁷⁸¹ CPR Church leaders, "La Guerre, la Mission de Paix et de Réconciliation de l'Eglise". Letter of 18 February 1991 to the Churches of Uganda (Church of Uganda, Anglican; Catholic Church of Uganda, Other Protestant Churches and Seven Day Adventist Church of Uganda).

⁷⁸² Interview with the former chairman of the commission, Revd M. Munyaneza, March 1995.

idea was strongly resisted by some senior executives of the Council and was finally abandoned. Instead, a commission for "Justice, Peace and Reconciliation" was created in 1993, but as far as this writer knows, it had little influence⁷⁸³.

The main handicaps of the CPR could be summarised in two points: First, the co-ordination of the activities by a staff much more interested in working for their own denomination than promoting an ecumenical experience and co-operation between the denominations. The second handicap was in the institutional one that transformed the CPR into a machine of bureaucracy and competition for privileges, posts and leadership influence. The council attributed much importance to the Church leaders for every initiative through a plethora of bodies while the General Secretariat enjoyed a second plan role instead of being a think tank of the organisation⁷⁸⁴.

VI. 2.3. Dynamic forces in Mediation.

VI. 2.3.1. Formation of a 'Committee of Contacts'

Following two visits to Rwanda of Revd Chipenda, the General Secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), the Rwandan Churches agreed to set up an ecumenical body, the 'Committee of Contacts'- a title perhaps copied from the opposition grouping: *Comité de Concertation*- to mediate efficiently in the crisis mentioned in the introduction to this chapter⁷⁸⁵.

One of the committee's co-chairpersons, M. Twagirayesu has collected and published all the messages and agreements between the political parties concluded up to the end of 1992⁷⁸⁶. The author of the collection invited Christians and people of good will to "pray for peace and reconciliation and also to disapprove whatever departed from the agreement between the committee and the party leaders". In the introduction, Twagirayesu presents the creation of the 'Comit'e des Contacts' as having been motivated by the challenge addressed to the Churches by the disputes on the formation of a coalition government, the violent

⁷⁸³ In one of its two meetings the General Secretary announced the existence of a substantial loan provided by the German Brot Fur die Welt (Bread for the World) for the activities of Human Rights, Peace, Justice, and Reconciliation. In reality, none of the proposed actions would be realised.

⁷⁸⁴ Outside the General assembly, there was the President and vice-president; the legal representative and deputy legal representative; the executive committee; the meeting of the legal representatives of Churches; the meetings of the commissions in which the Church leaders were massively present...all the chiefs competed to have a visible role.

⁷⁸⁵ T. Nsengiyumva, bishop of the Catholic diocese of Kabgayi and M. Twagirayesu, President of the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda, respectively chairperson of the Roman Catholic Episcopal Conference and the Protestant Council in Rwanda, co-chaired the Committee.

The Committee succeeded in bringing the two protagonists, the RPF and the Kigali government to the table of negotiations. It mediated in the internal crisis following the birth of the political parties, a mediation which ended in the formation of the multi-party government of five main political parties in which the former ruling party, the MRND was guaranteed fifty per cent of the posts. They chaired other meetings including the November 1993 Symposium held in Mombassa.

⁷⁸⁶ Twagirayesu, M., *Inzira y' Amahoro mu Rwanda* (the Peace Process in Rwanda). Kigali: CPR/CEPR, December 1992, 48p.

manifestations and civil disobedience that followed the birth of new multi-party politics. The 'le Comité des Contacts' made of 10 Church leaders, he wrote, was given as mission: "to meet with the leaders of the party politics and the authorities and to examine what could help Rwanda to walk in peace and true Democracy"⁷⁸⁸.

Subsequent activities not reported in the collection include the November 1993 Mombassa Symposium, and an attempt to reconcile the different factions within the MDR and PL political parties whose divisions and quarrels from the second half of 1993 gave a pretext to the President's camp to delay the implementation of the peace accord⁷⁸⁹.

The Mombassa Symposium, 27 to 29 November 1993, *Towards a lasting peace for Rwanda* was organised under the sponsorship of the Nairobi-based continental Council of Churches, the *All Africa Conference of Churches* (AACC) which was then chaired by the South Africa Anglican Archbishop, Desmond Tutu (who was not present at Mombassa). The meeting in which a hundred representatives of Churches, political parties, government, RPF, NGOs and ecumenical organisations had discussions on the "National Reconciliation, the implementation of the Arusha Peace Accord; the type of democracy for Rwanda"⁷⁹⁰ was convened when the internal climate was extremely tense. The Arusha Peace Accord was facing many obstacles; the political parties were quarrelling and splitting into divisions, whilst the United Nations was delaying sending 2500 men of the contingent required to supervise the 22 months period of transition.

Prior to the meeting some influential Church leaders showed their reluctance to participate in the Mombassa meeting 'without the MRND'⁷⁹¹. Finally, when these leaders became persuaded that participation was the only way to walk towards peace, once in Mombassa, some were instrumental in insisting the MRND send a delegate. The insistence paid off when a second category functionary⁷⁹² arrived a day before the end of the meeting.

During the symposium, two introductions on the political and Christian perspectives in reconciliation were made by the AACC general Secretary, and Prof. Hezekias Asefa. Then the participants identified the common factors among the Rwandan people; they reflected

⁷⁸⁸ The texte in Kinyarwanda reads: kubonana n'abatware b'amashyaka ya politiki n'abategetsi b'igihugu kugira ngo niba bishobotse babafashe kurebera hamwe icyatuma u Rwanda rugendera mu nzira y'amahoro muri Demokarasi isesuye. Ibid. p.1.

⁷⁸⁹ Déclarations du 24 Décembre 1993 et du 7 Janvier 1994. In Bulletin de la Conférence Episcopale, Kigali, No 2/Mars 1994, pp. 38-4.

⁷⁹⁰ Ibid. pp. 36-3.

⁷⁹¹ In the so-called CPR 'Justice Peace and Reconciliation' commission above mentioned, some members including the present author raised the question to know if the Church leaders would choose to be with those opposed to peace process or if they would back those acting for peace regardless eventually their fragility. Meanwhile, the AACC called from Nairobi to announce that some among sponsors from Europe were already in Nairobi, this to make clear that an postponement of the meeting would cost not only resources but credibility to Churches.

⁷⁹² While all the party politics and the Churches were represented by their top leaders, the delegate of MRND was Augustin Habinshuti, responsible for the information of the MRND political party. However, the MRND delegate missed no opportunity to raise cynical attacks against RPF and the opposition.

together and sent a message of last hope to the Rwandan government, the politicians, the Churches and the international community requesting them to accompany the peace process by installing the institutions proposed in the Arusha Accord⁷⁹³. The Churches were requested to organise a follow-up of the meeting inside Rwanda, widely open to Rwandans of the Diaspora. The hierarchy was invited to open their 'Comité des Contacts' to new blood including laity and members of the NGOs. By April, 7th nothing of the kind had happened.

VI. 2.3.2. Church Mediation in Party Factions

Another burning issue in which Church leaders were called to mediate was the divisions and quarrels among some opposition political parties due to form the institutions planned in the peace accord, in particular, the MDR and the PL. As suggested earlier, some observers have advanced different causes for the divisions including the interference of the two poles of power, the MRND and RPF in the internal organisation of the political parties, in their competition to gain more influence. The next paragraphs is to briefly assess the character of the divisions and their implications for the political crisis that required the Church to intervene.

The MDR party was the renewed historical MDR-PARMEHUTU of Kayibanda which was dissolved in 1973 after the military coup of Habyarimana. During the 1991 multi-party politics, the party was resuscitated by, among other of its leaders, the children and the sons-in-laws of Kayibanda⁷⁹⁴. Two factions rivalled. On the one hand, the faction of 'reformers' led by its president, F.Twagiramungu argued for abandoning the PARMEHUTU reference. According to Twagiramungu and his partisans, social relations were no longer based on the "Batutsi domination over the Bahutu" but on the *Akazu*, the nucleus of the Habyarimana dictatorship against the rest of the population. The rival faction led by its second vice-president, the businessman, Frodouard Karamira and its Executive Secretary, Dr Donat Murego would argue that the 1959 Revolution remained an unfinished agenda. For them, the RPF attack was the manifestation of the Batutsi ambition to reinstate their domination. In such conditions, according to them, the duty of the Bahutu was to join together to oppose the Batutsi. Later, in 1993 this group joined the MDR/CDR and formed the 'Hutu power' ethnic ideology that carried out the genocide.

In the PL, one faction led by the president of the party, Justin Mugenzi, together with his first deputy, Stan Mbonampeka and the General Secretary, Mrs Agnès Ntamabyariro defended the

⁷⁹³ AACC, report of the Mombasa Synposium. Towards a lasting peace. Nairobi, January, 1994. See also Bulletin de la Conference des Evêques Catholiques du Rwanda, No 2, Mars 1994, pp. 36-3.

⁷⁹⁴ Including Faustin Twagiramungu and Emmanuel Gapyisi. Twagiramungu was designated Prime Minister by the Arusha Peace Accord, escaped miraculously during the massacres conducted by the Presidential guard soldiers and latter, became Prime Minister for one year, of the government formed by the RPF. Gapyisi was assassinated in May 1993 in the entrance of his residence in Kicukiro, Kigali. Professor Guichoua who dedicated his scholarly

theses of the MDR/CDR 'Hutu power'. The second faction led by the second vice-president, Lando Ndasigwa, a successful businessman from a Tutsi background, owner of 'Hotel Chez Lando', who was Minister of Social Affairs in the Mrs Uwiringiyimana Cabinet, was pro-RPF. Each faction in both parties claimed to be legitimate.

The divisions became a national issue because people wanted to know whose faction would inherit the positions allocated by the Peace Accord in the Cabinet, Parliament and other institutions during the transition period.

On 7 January 1994, the 'Comité des Contacts' of the Churches suggested a reconciling solution: first, for the MDR, they proposed that M. Twagiramungu, who was already recorded by the negotiators of the peace treaty as Premier for the transitional period, be accepted by the rival faction which in return would give him the three candidates of his party in the Cabinet. For the PL, they proposed an arrangement of 1/2 and 6/5 meaning that one faction would have one member out of three allocated to their party by the accord in the Cabinet and 6 MPs, whilst the second faction would have 2 Cabinet members and 5 MPs⁷⁹⁵.

The proposition was overwhelmingly backed by the conglomerate of NGO and civil society, most of the diplomatic representatives but energetically criticised and rejected by the two factions of each concerned political party. Both accused the Church of an "unacceptable interference in politics". On 20 January 1994, the Roman Catholic bishops retaliated reaffirming their rights as "citizens of the country to express their opinion and to advocate for the concerns of the population" against irresponsible politicians who quarrel for power on the back of a starving population⁷⁹⁶.

As they were accused of being manipulated by the regime, both hierarchies collectively or individually had a problem of making their mediation accepted by the opposition and the rebellion⁷⁹⁷.

Clearly, the 'Comité des Contacts' mediation was desperately needed. However, the long absence of the clergy during the socio-political developments which preceded the 1990 crisis had alienated the influence they could have had on the different actors in the crises.

VI. 2.3.3. The 'Prayer-Breakfast' Mediation

During the course of the crisis several internal and external mediations were attempted from within or outside Africa. A particular initiative was made by a Germano-American team

book *Les Crises Politiques au Burundi et au Rwanda*, 1993, Paris: Karthala, 1995, discusses the hypothesis of the beneficiary of the Gapyisi's murder, the President Habyarimana camp or the RPF and gives preference to the first.

⁷⁹⁵ Comité des Contacts, Déclarations (24/12/1993) des représentants des Eglises Catholiques et Protestantes au Rwanda au sujet de leur médiation en vue de la Réconciliation au sein du Parti M.D.R. In Bulletin de la Conférence des Evêques Catholiques du Rwanda, p.38/9; Déclaration du 7 Janvier 1994 (Bulletin, p. 40; et déclaration de la Société Civile, Ibid. p.43).

⁷⁹⁶ Eglise Catholique., Communiqué de Presse des Evêques Catholiques au Rwanda, Kigali, 21 January 1994. In Bulletin de la Conférence des Evêques Catholiques du Rwanda no 2/Mars 1994, p.15.

comprising two Germans, a Frankfurt banker and a former MP in the Bundestag, a US retired colonel and diplomat working as co-ordinator of the aid to former USSR countries for the White House, and a former US diplomat in Somalia who represented his country in the Arusha inter-Rwandan negotiations. The team tried under the so-called 'Prayer Breakfast' movement to bring together President Habyarimana of Rwanda, Museveni of Uganda and Buyoya of Burundi and their families to read a passage of the Bible and pray and eventually to become friends through this Christian fellowship initiated by American Senators.

The team leader (Decker, a former German MP) tells the diary of his experience with diverse political personalities in a 240 pages book⁷⁹⁸. Due to the excitement of the project, this writer asked for a translation from two persons, a German native and a Rwandan who ministered in Germany for more than five years⁷⁹⁹. The book shows the Habyarimana's entourage trying to attract international compassion to "the small Rwanda, victim of Ugandan aggression". It identifies the major actors, including the RPF, playing hide-and-seek in the conflict. Finally, the book shows how the author's effort became a naive diplomacy manipulated by the Habyarimana family with whom he developed a firm friendship.

Decker argues that his relations with his friend Bernard, a former diplomat then politician encouraged him to undertake the mediation when the Rwandan war broke out in the northern part of the country. The author made several visits to the region with a view to bringing both the Presidents of Rwanda and of Uganda to cease their mutual accusations about the responsibility of the war. They met with the Presidents of Burundi, Buyoya and then of Tanzanian, Hassan Mwinyi with their families. They started a prayer meeting together where they could exchange views on the crisis. Decker was later introduced in the bush, by the President of Uganda to the Commander of the RPF (the Rebellion). According to Decker, the Commander made clear to the mediator that the best way to resolve the conflict was to invite Habyarimana put the end to the 30 years stateless refugee situation. Time after time, Decker motivated the two major protagonists to reopen the negotiations after a period of blockage. After the signature of the Peace Accord, early in August 1993, he arranged a visit of the President of Rwanda to Uganda; the Church hierarchies in Rwanda and Uganda participated and expressed their satisfaction for the peace treaty.

However, in March 1994, the accord was not implemented. The President and Bernard were concerned: the Batutsi would take their revenge. The team restarted their mediating

⁷⁹⁷ Some influential members of the opposition parties to whom this author talked to rejected the mediation of the Church hierarchies on the ground that even the Church hierarchy proposal was drafted by the President's office.

⁷⁹⁸ Anonymous, *Ruanda: Tod und Hoffnung im Land der tausend Hugel* (Ruanda: the invisible in the land of thousand hills). Stuttgart, Friedrich Hanssler, 1995. The names of the author's interlocutors are presented in the beginning of the book in pseudonym.

⁷⁹⁹ Both persons live in Germany and know the present author.

pilgrimage consulting with the US and German diplomats in Kigali. The effort was shortened by the death on April, 6 1994, of Habyarimana⁸⁰⁰.

Two weeks after the RPF victory, a member of the Uganda Cabinet invited the author to visit Rwanda. He met the RPF commander, now vice-President. In September the new President of Rwanda was in Germany and spoke on the urgent priorities including Justice, Reconstruction and Reconciliation and International aid⁸⁰¹.

Although written from the point of view of Bernard and the late President of Rwanda's friendship, the book gives some sketches of information on the conflict. First, it enlightens on the regional and international implications in the conflict, including the Ugandan and Burundian links with the rebellion. It brings out the Habyarimana's camp crucial role in the blockage of the accord due to their fear of the RPF revenge. Second, the question arises as what sense does friendship means for the author. After the death of the President and Bernard, he was excited to enter into new relationship with their former enemies, now rulers without showing at what extent the 'biblical diplomacy' had contributed or failed to resolve the conflict.

Thirdly, the author's original intention was to dismantle the enmity between the Presidents and to inculcate in them the sense of responsibility before God and men through a simple strategy of reading an extract of the Bible. There are two levels of uncertainty left by such a démarche. One, this spiritual political naiveté risks being manipulated by politicians who would take advantage of the Christian or religious moral authority to rehabilitate their credibility without moving an inch from their own agenda. The second question unanswered in the book is how such a démarche which combines secret diplomacy with a 'Biblicist theology' outside the participation for more criticism and guidance of the faithful can bring about reconciliation. Phrased differently, in the absence of the Church discipline and theology, have Christians have no other resource to exert pressure on political protagonists to consent to achieve political peace?

Lastly, if this naive spiritual mediation failed to bring about mediation it is because, like others of the kind, the experience had to deal with an administrative elite, Christian in name, but highly secularised, who do not believe any more in the transforming power of prayer but who see rather in such international moral action a means to secure their own cause.

VI. 2.3.4. Individual groups and Parishes

Many Christian individuals, associations and parishes have tried to work for reconciliation. These include human rights organisations and peace movements which like LIPREDOR,

⁸⁰⁰ Actually, this author suspects that Bernard too, died in the presidential plane shot down by unidentified elements.

⁸⁰¹ End of the story dedicated to all the abandoned children from the Rwanda tragedy. Anonymous, Ruanda: Tod und Hoffnung im Land der tausend Hugel. Stuttgart: Hanssler, 199.

ADL, RDES-TABARA, DUHARANIRE AMAHORU; Umukristo mu Mjyambere group were created early in 1990s. Other existing institutions of Christian background such as Oxfam Rwanda, Iwacu Centre; AEE, ARTC... were encouraged by the democratic liberalisation to start the non-violence and reconciliation campaigns. Some individuals, Bahutu and Batutsi, known by the present author, worked hard together, pressuring the Church leaders to contribute to resolving the conflicts.

Many produced valuable work in monitoring human rights abuse and educating for reconciliation and peace; contrary to some ill-informed remarks⁸⁰², they worked under restrictive conditions but proclaimed prophetic messages. Among others remembered by the present author were Father J-C. Mahame, chairman of LIPREDHOR and Israël Havugimana, AEE (see 5.3.5.) Francophone Executive who were killed early on 7 April 1994.

Secondly, different parishes and some Roman Catholic dioceses have tried to introduce justice and human rights issue in their teaching⁸⁰³. On the 21st March 1993, for the first time in the history of Rwandan Christianity, the Presbyterian Church Kigali parish, initiated a peace rally, a 4 miles trip which gathered at a roundabout of the Capital city centre. A service of repentance according to the biblical book of Daniel chapter 9 was organised. The messages expressed the regret and repentance for the apathy of Christians which prevented them from condemning energetically violence, heartlessness and massacres⁸⁰⁴.

The event opened an era of great awareness of the rising violence. During the massacres that broke out at the end of the same month in the Bugesera region and left for dead more than 500 people⁸⁰⁵, some groups of Christians from Kigali organised visits of comfort and solidarity to the affected communities. The motto: "Christ is our Peace, ethnic coexistence is possible" was repeated in different congregations and in large agglomerations.

This expression of solidarity with the victims of massacres has been regarded inside and outside the country as Christian witness against the evil. Now, looking at the initiative from a distance and from the point of view of an organiser, this author is aware of an unfinished agenda due to the absence of preliminary preparations. A group of elite from Kigali visited, talked and learnt about the manipulation of the tensions but left Christians alone without reflecting together how to equip them with the capacity to challenge the structural mechanisms of violence. In the last instance this turned out to be another evangelistic monologue from the Kigali elite which went on to proclaim the biblical truths but then left

⁸⁰² Chrétien J-P & al, *Rwanda, les media du génocide*. Paris: Karthala, p.36.

⁸⁰³ See specimen of a three days session on human rights and democracy organised jointly by the Iwacu centre; ADL, Oxfam in Gisenyi Prefecture with the collaboration of Mr. J.P. Godding, a Holland native councillor on co-operative movement. A similar programme was held almost simultaneously in the parishes of Nyundo diocese.

⁸⁰⁴ Documents of the rallye, see archives of the Kigali Presbyterian Parish, and the collection of the present author as organiser of the rallye.

⁸⁰⁵ ADL, *Rapport des droits de l'homme au Rwanda*, Septembre 1992 a Septembre 1993.

the local people without leaders committed to a very responsible follow-up. The massacres were planned nationally and executed locally in a wider plan aiming to resist changes⁸⁰⁶. The initiative was so fragmented and so small that it could not address the structural mechanisms that sustained the crisis.

VI. 2.3.4.1. 'Umukrisito mu Majyambere'⁸⁰⁷

Initiated by father Blanchard, former head of the White Fathers in Rwanda, Priest of the Nyamirambo Roman Catholic parish, the group reflected and produced publications in Kinyarwanda and initiated a political education of the population on different public issues: the Gospel and Human rights, youth' problems, their rights and democracy, the Bible and the Church teachings; political parties in relation to the Bible and the episcopate teachings; the free choice according to the Bible; the role of a soldier in a democratic society. The last issue, No 9 *Ubutegetsi ni ubwacu* (People's Power) as indicated earlier in this work was an ecumenical publication from the present author, reflecting on the principles, the models and forms of government, Christian in public life; it presented and commented on the 1991 new constitution which opened the country to multi-party politics as well as the manifestos of seven major political parties⁸⁰⁸.

VI. 2.3.4.2. AEE : the Cost of Courage

The Africa Evangelistic Enterprise (AEE) is one of the few truly African missionary societies created in the 1960s by some products of the Protestant Revival, including a South African, Michael Cassidy, and a Ugandan Bishop, the late Festo Kivengere. It has its headquarters in Nairobi where it held its two International Missionary Conferences in 1976 and 1994⁸⁰⁹.

The Africa Evangelistic Enterprise organised from December 1990 various meetings on reconciliation in co-operation with some other Christian organisations and the Protestant

⁸⁰⁶ The late Olivier Iyakaremye who convoyed the team that went in the Gashora area witnessed to me how he confronted some people he knew in the mobs holding the machetes. Confused one of them said, let arranged this issue first, and then we will read the Bible after. In Ngeruka Presbyterian Church where the present author preached on the "secular symbiosis, in daily basis among the Rwandans", during the Sunday Service on 29 March 1993, the team was told publicly by the late Revd Mugemanyi of Ngeruka and his congregation a moving testimony how the elders protected his family, strongly resisting the attacks organised by the local authorities, the councillor, the Burgomaster and the Deputy Prefet. Then they told how they were incapable of opposing armed soldiers who tortured innocents including the same Minister and his family and killed nine people in the village. This was early 1993. During 1994 the tragedy was planned in such a manner peace safari of such kind would not work. Those who were committed to reconciliation were either dead or in hiding.

⁸⁰⁷ Umukristo mu Majyambere: Christian in development Group.

⁸⁰⁸ Umukristo Mu majyambere, *Ivangili n'Uburenganzira bw'ikiremwa muntu*. Kigali: Pallotti Presse, 1991, 96 p. First edition 3000 copies; Umukristo mu Majyambere, *Nta giti cyera kitabanje kurabya*. Kigali: Pallotti Presse, 1991, 82 p. First edition, 1500 copies; Umukristo mu Majyambere, *Duhararire demokarasi*. Kigali: Pallotti Presse, 1991, 38; Umukristo mu Majyambere, *Amashyaka ya politiki*. Kigali: Pallotti Presse, 1991; *Twitegure Amatora*. Kigali: Pallotti Presse, 1992, 38; Umukristo mu Majyambere. *Musirikare Tuganire*. Kigali: Pallotti Presse, 1992, 78 p; Th, *Ubutegetsi ni Ubwacu*. Kigali: Umukristo mu Majyambere/Pallotti Presse, 1993, 144 p. First edition, 3000 copies.

⁸⁰⁹ In 1981 the organisation opened an office in Kigali to serve the Central Africa French speaking countries. The first assembly to which the present author participated in 1976 as steward was called PACLA I, Pana-african Christian Leadership Assembly. This thesis also documented from the PACLA II material and from the formal co-operation between the AEE for the seminars of Reconciliation and the Bible Society of Rwanda of which the present author was Secretary.

Churches. A typical campaign would include a week's conference for ministers and Christian leaders whilst public meetings were held on a daily basis in the city stadiums. The messages for reconciliation were proclaimed in the administration offices,⁸¹⁰ schools, hospitals, prisons. For example in the Kigali City Hall, December 1993, Revd Munyaneza, a Presbyterian minister, compared the Rwandan situation to Amos's epoch. He challenged those who had built their wealth on the blood of innocents and injustices to repent and work for justice and peace. In the parliament on the 14 December 1993 a similar message prepared mainly by a team of lay people involved in political changes was presented to members of cabinet and parliament by a panel of some Christian leaders⁸¹¹.

Obviously, few hard-liners of the regime were present in the halls. This led some participants to think that the campaign was preaching to the already converted. However, the discussions pointed out another reality: the fact that the Church leaders have been and remained incapable of articulating the truth of violence however obvious and widespread it was.

A challenging message in the same campaign was delivered in the National stadium, AMAHORO, on the 19 December 1993 by Israel Havugimana to almost 10.000 people. Havugimana affirmed that the country was losing its direction and was moving towards darkness. To get rid of the misadventures, Israel suggested, the country needed a leader like Moses who would put forward not their own interests but the people's; a clever leader, patient, credible before people and fearing God had to emerge if Rwanda was to survive as a nation⁸¹².

VI. 3. Autopsy of the Church

VI. 3.1. The Catholic Diocese of Kabgayi

During the 1990s socio-political changes, an original initiative was undertaken by the newly nominated Roman Catholic bishop of Kabgayi, Thaddée Nsengiyuma⁸¹³. In December 1991, he signed a revolutionary document from the presbytery of his diocese affirming that the Church was sick of lies, sick of working under the shadow of the state, sick of working without transparency. The document analysed and proposed solutions to crucial problems

⁸¹⁰ During two meetings chaired by the present author in the Capital -City hall and in the parliament palace at Kimihurura for members of the cabinet and parliament, the speakers included, Revd Munyaneza, a Presbyterian, and Joseph Nsanzurwimo, Legal Representative of the Pentecost Church, with bishop Rwaje (Episcopal) and Ruhumuriza (Methodist) and Revd Twagirayesu (President, Presbyterian Church) on the panels. They commented on the abuse of power by the elite from any of the two communities in our history.

⁸¹¹ The Church leaders were asked to challenge a system with which they co-operated. They also had before them a divided audience with members of the cabinet and parliament surely expecting the Church leaders advocacy whilst the second category of the audience included both conservative and reformer Christians who wanted true political reforms and those opposed to any involvement in politics such as the members of the very popular *Hosiana Choir* of the Pentecost Church present to sing in the meeting.

⁸¹² Havugimana, I., Recorded message. December, 19 1993. Collected by the present author.

⁸¹³ No parenthood with his homonym, the Archbishop of Kigali, Vincent Nsengiyumva.

including the war, multiparty politics and education and urged the Church to accept Jesus Christ's liberation from its compromising alliances and to commit itself to telling the truth⁸¹⁴. The bishop undertook more initiatives such as opening the parishes of his diocese to the conferences and workshops on human rights, democracy and reconciliation organised by different non governmental organisations like OXFAM Rwanda, Centre Iwacu, ADL. In the beginning of 1994, he hosted a seminar of political youth organisations including the RPF. The RPF delegation arrived at Kabgayi from their Mulindi (near Uganda) stronghold under UN escort. These initiatives made him not only friends but enemies, in particular within the regime which certainly expected a blind 'clan co-operation', as he was kin to the presidential family. Many witnesses had observed the deterioration of his relations with the Archbishop, his homonymous, V. Nsengiyumva. Both succumbed under the bullets of a RPF commando in Kabgayi, in early June 1994.

VI. 3.2. The Presbyterian Church of Rwanda

Likewise, meeting in January 1992 in the new guest house of the Church in the Kibuye city, a 12 member commission nominated by the Executive board (Conseil Synodal) of the Presbyterian Church produced an assessment of the Church and society and made recommendations for the future⁸¹⁵. Members from various professions, including the president of the Church, reflected on Church relations with politics, the challenge to evangelisation at different epochs; the current burning issues including rural area difficulties, refugees, human rights, war, political reforms, regionalism and ethicism. The participants affirmed that one way among others to redefine the political reforms was to organise a 'National Conference' (see chapter VII about the concept). In the 24 page document the Commission reaffirmed its conviction that when fulfilling its mission the Church must be confident in the strength not only from its broad range of ecumenical partners but also from its Head, Jesus-Christ. They made them available to assist the Church leaders and bodies (Presidency, General Synod, Synod Council) where an intervention to prevent human rights abuse would be needed⁸¹⁶. Unfortunately, the distribution of the booklet was entrusted to the Church Service of theology which delayed it until the April 1994 tragedy.⁸¹⁷

⁸¹⁴ Diocese de Kabgayi, *Twivugurure tubane mu mahoro* (let reform ourselves to co-exist peacefully. Kabgayi/Gitarama, decembre 1991.

⁸¹⁵ The present author was nominated chair of the ad-hoc Commission.

⁸¹⁶ EPR, *Ukuri kubaka igihugu*, Kigali: Urwego, March 1992.

⁸¹⁷ In a seminar held in Hotel des Diplomates on the "role of the Protestant Church and its members in politics and reconciliation", early in December 1993 with Dr Konrad Raiser, Secretary General of WCC, Jose Chipenda, Secretary General of the All Africa Conference of Churches, and Michael Twagirayesu, Chairman of CPR as lecturers, the latter was asked to explain why the Churches were so slow in promoting concrete actions on human rights and democracy. He illustrated his answer in saying that they had difficulties in distributing the 'Ukuri kubaka igihugu' document, whilst another document of a religious tone, *Impamvu z'ibyangiro Byacu* (the reasons for our hope) met success. For him, Christians were manifesting tiredness about politics. Like many observers, this author has suspected that the Church leadership which was still sympathetic to the views of the Habyarimana has been embarrassed by the overwhelming welcome many among the opposition activists and the RPF

Another initiative interrupted by the tragedy was an inter-church campaign aiming to develop awareness of Christians on social changes and democratisation, human rights and peace, to emphasise the need of reconciliation, to challenge regionalism, sectarianism and ethnic feelings manipulations. Elaborated by the Francophone partner Churches of UEM in Rwanda and R.D. Congo, the campaign was unable to start as planned in January 1994 due to problems of communication between the three partners in Rwanda and former Zaire. The programme was postponed until the end of April 1994⁸¹⁸.

VI. 4. 1994, the Lost Hope!

1994 was declared 'Year of Peace' by a network of Christian individuals and organisations. With the intention of launching a non-violent Christian movement an ecumenical group comprising lay people some priests and pastors started to organise rallies and prayer meetings for peace in various areas in the country late in 1993. In January 1994 a rally was organised in various places of the country. It was preceded by several meetings of prayer and fasting in parishes⁸¹⁹. From 6.00 a.m. to midnight on the 31 December 1993. According to the manifesto signed by 100 personalities of various professions, the initiators intended to "take our responsibility and stop violence by peaceful means, to promote political, social justice and to root a democratic culture in Rwandan life and to promote human and Christian values"⁸²⁰.

The march, one of the rare public ecumenical manifestation of political character, was enthusiastically greeted around the country and in the world. 8000 people participated in Kigali, 5000 in Butare, 5000 in Gisenyi, 3000 in Gikongoro, 2000 at Ruhuha, 6000 in Kirambo and 8000 in Biniga⁸²¹. Cardinal Etchegaray from Vatican, Konrad Raiser, General Secretary of WCC, Fons Margot, A. Sondag, Mgr F. Kuntner, respectively presidents Commission Justice and Peace Belgium, France and Austria, Jo Becker for FOR New York, Konrad Lubbert for MIR Germany, Hermut Eigemann and Kakule Molo for VEM Wuppertal were among the 33 international ecumenical organisations which sent messages of solidarity to the organisers on the day of the rally.

manifested to that radical reflection, the *Ukuri Kubaka Igihugu*. Notes from the present author who chaired the Seminar.

⁸¹⁸ The joint plan of action of the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda, the Episcopal Church (Butare, Shyogwe, Kigeme and Cyangugu dioceses) and the Baptist Church in Kivu, Zaire (CBK) was formulated by a group of three persons nominated by the Churches: Bishop A. Birindabagabo of the Episcopal Church' dioceses, Revd. Kambale Mangolopa of CBK and the present writer of EPR. It came about through a consultation held in Kigali September 1993 between those Churches and a German partner, the United Evangelical Mission in Wuppertal which wanted to encourage its Francophone Church members to influence positively the ongoing social and political changes. The plan was confirmed by the Church leaders together with the authorities of the VEM and the authors who met in Ramate/Botswana subsequent to the General Assembly of the VEM in the end of October 1993.

⁸¹⁹ Documentation of the present author.

⁸²⁰ Duharanire amahoro. Déclaration de la base du Mouvement. Kigali: Décembre, 1993, plus de 100 signataires.

⁸²¹ The statistics were collected by Father Guy Theunis. See his communication of 10 January, 1994 to those who sent to the organisers a message of solidarity. Significantly, the last two areas, Biniga and Kirambo were located in the zone of fighting between RPF and governmental troop.

From Gisenyi, a western participant enthusiastically wrote: "I saw peace descending from the sky of Gisenyi". JP. Godding went on to say how, for the first time, in that stronghold of Habyarimana, a very Catholic region, Protestant and Catholic Christians and clergy shared the messages, liturgies, songs, biblical texts, sermons and kisses of peace. In Butare, the second largest city, the message focused on the suffering of the population and on the qualities of good rulers needed to end the impasse the country was facing.

Long extracts of the messages were read on the two and half hours broadcast on the National radio with the costs paid by the organisers. The movement pursued its activities in weekly meeting of prayers for peace, justice and reconciliation. They produced several messages protesting against violence and massacres; the messages were read in the Churches in Sunday services. They continued also to portray the characteristics of a good leader in 12 points including competence, democratic character, honesty and example of good manager of family and professional relations.

One of the most difficult questions the organisers had to resolve with regard to the 1 January 1994 rally was whether or not the Church leaders would be associated with the march. Knowing their pro-regime tendency, the organisers debated the problem and decided that realism was needed, because if they had to mobilise Christians in the parishes, the Church leader's approval was necessary. Thus, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Kigali Vincent Nsengiyumva and the president of the Protestant Council, Michael Twagirayesu were invited to deliver a 5 minutes speech each to terminate the 150 minutes programme live broadcast on Radio Rwanda. Yet with these restrictions, some people saw the two leaders' presence as politically embarrassing. In the end, the hope generated by the rally was gradually affected by the continuing political impasse and then extinguished by the huge tragedy which started on 7th April 1994. Thus, the Year of Hope became the Year of lost Hope!

Conclusion: Prophetic Words, too Little too Late

This chapter has assessed the factors that marked the global context of the crisis. It then considered the different stances and intervention taken by the Churches in political crisis. Churches' mediation was necessary but it had to overcome a number of handicaps. This the Churches failed to do.

Firstly not having developed their theological thinking with regard to violence and the absence of justice and mercy, Church leaders were more vulnerable to political manipulation. In the framework of the struggle for power within the two poles, the MRND/Habyarimana camp and the RPF vis-à-vis whom other political parties had a thin margin of manoeuvre, speculations and political manipulations were exploited as means of diversion. In fact, the party leaders would accept some of the advice given by the Church leaders provided it

promoted the interest of their sponsors and they would reject it if they perceived it as an obstruction to their objectives.

There was also a problem with the way the meetings of the Church leaders and the political party leaders were communicated to the general public. The Church leaders used laconic declarations, in the form of the diplomatic communiqués throughout the media. The accounts were an enumeration of peremptory instructions for media effect which betrayed the absence of ethical and spiritual guidance⁸²². With regard to clarity, the messages were formulated in a kind of 'jest and earnest' condemning eventually all the 'politicians' without defining those responsible for the political impasse. *Inzira y'Amahoro* proved then to be a failure in bringing a Christian perspective in the political mediation.

The absence of a clear vision and a defined perspective was manifested in the Churches' early withdrawal after the beginning of the peace talks before any progress was made. There was no further possibility of accompanying the two sides with moral and disinterested guidance; nor any possibility of drawing out the moral and ethical implications of the different protocols comprising the peace treaty⁸²³.

The Church mediators were incapable of challenging both sides, the regime and the rebellion on the issues of violence and power struggle; they were powerless before the war initiated by the refugees because they had demonstrated a dramatic absence of mercy and compassion for thirty years. The Churches for example should have firmly asserted to both parties that even in the case of an overwhelmingly military victory the sole guarantee for a lasting peace was power sharing and good governance. Equally, the fact that the Churches not only abandoned the refugees in the wilderness during the crises but some even used the governmental pictures featuring the refugees as "a group, thirsty for power, domination and revenge" diminished their credibility as a neutral moral force in the conflict.

Secondly, in considering Church mediation, this work distinguished two types of ecclesiology. On the one hand, the Church of the lower strata made up of laity and some progressive members of the clergy who were to take some initiatives at the grass-roots, in particular the formulation of material for education on human rights, democracy and reconciliation. This form of Church was fragile, vis-à-vis the structures of dictatorship. On

⁸²² However, the Church leaders defended the necessity of reporting their meetings by the fact that the political party leaders many of them were linked to violent groups, were the same who in private meetings would promise to working for peace. Thus the reporting aimed to show to the public what has been attempted.

⁸²³ For example, the 'Committee of Contacts' elaborated the protocol for the April 7 1992 government of five political parties but no mechanism was suggested to resolve an eventual blockage. Equally in the meeting of November 2 1992 about the insecurity and the Arusha negotiations they recommended that the political authorities avoid to speak in political party rallies; they proposed to have a group of wise persons (Comité des sages) made of representatives of the categories constitutionally forbidden to participate in politics; they proposed to dismantle the militia of the political parties, but again there was no procedure to ensure the application of these proposals. See Bulletin de la Conférence des Evêques Catholiques du Rwanda, no. pp.; 23; 28;3.

the other hand, the Church of the higher strata, the hierarchies of Catholic and Protestant bishops.

In fact, when the war broke out, the methodology adopted by the bishops failed to communicate the signs of hope among the people of God. Its didactic nature did not invite them to resist the sense of fatality and inevitability of the conflict that was being promoted by the emerging reactionary forces. The messages came in a very tight package that did not allow people to analyse or assimilate them through a participatory process. In addition, the delivery valued the traditional patronising approach in which people hear long and confusing homilies with heads bowed.

The reading of the messages in the Sunday services, according to this writer's experience, was the testing moment: long extracts of texts written with imperative admonitions were read during the mass after which people left, bored, for home. All the channels of communication within the churches were not exploited. Different basic communities, youth and women's associations, denominational schools, and theological seminars as well as the media were not harnessed in the debating and collection of the feed-back.

Not only the pastoral letters and statements arrived too late to be of any real assistance in the proceedings leading up to the crisis but they also resembled in most cases the type of text dropped from heaven, through the bunkers of the bishops separated from the daily reality of Rwandans. None of the 'clerical monarchs' came to incarnate the messages, to personalise and to implement it.

The pastoral letters dealt with contemporary social questions in an authoritative fashion. The bishops practised a *teaching ecclesiology*, by the transmission of the truth from top to bottom. It might have been useful to refer to the Roman legal maxim adopted by the Canon Law: "quod omnes tangit ab omnibus tractari et approbari debet" ("what concerns all must be discussed and approved by all"). This means that there was a deep need of another kind of ecclesiology: a Listening Church, one which would exercise authority in dialogue. For example, the Church leaders could have released the drafts of the pastoral messages and invited members of the faithful community (eventually the protagonists in the conflicts) to comment on them. Thereafter, they would have had the opportunity to carefully screen the responses and take into consideration those useful in the preparation of the next drafts to be discussed. During the reception of such drafts, communities could have endorsed and accompanied the process and at the same time, been given the chance to reflect and reach a reasoned judgement on the basis of their own experience and opinion, not only of the Catholic community, but of all the nation.

The assessment highlighted the ethical issue that lies behind the delivery of these messages. It is out of question that the Church leaders' intention was appropriate and corresponded to

their role as representatives of moral forces. What is questionable however, is the motivation which may have been mixed. They used a dubious language to communicate to the population a sense of solidarity with the regime. From the perspective of this thesis, it seems that a different approach should have been to clearly define a model from a biblical ethos. Christ, the model of mediation between God and humanity offers principles for our intervention in any mediation. His presence alongside the poor and oppressed is a constant reminder of the necessity for the clergy to accompany Christian and society in moments of turmoil and of calm.

Lastly, Church mediation resulted mainly from internal and external pressure by Christians and ecumenical organisations. However, the Church leaders were not ethically and theologically equipped to act with reasonable freedom from political bias⁸²⁴. This led this writer to the suggestion that the Church leaders' primary motives in accepting to initiate the dialogue between the RPF and the Habyarimana's regime and between the latter and the internal political forces, were to ensure a situation in which Habyarimana would remain in a position of strength. In a sense, the Church leaders wanted to preserve the status quo in which they had not identified with the 'vaches maigres'.

But how can we articulate a genuine mediation taking into consideration the reality of a broken relationship between God and human beings? How can we heal a wounded and suffering society? How can we re-establish ecclesial integrity after the breakdown of truth telling in the Church? These will be discussed in our next and last chapter.

⁸²⁴ The Anglican archbishop, A. Nshamihigo had vehemently accused the chairperson of the Committee to work for the opposition and FPR, and to be hostile to the Head of the state. That created a malaise among the Roman Catholic bishops and in September 1992 almost led to the disintegration of the group. Actually, the Catholics have always been critical towards the Protestants for exposing their divisions in public. From then on Mgr. T. Nsengiyumva retreated in his Kabgayi diocese and became fewer enthusiast to attend the meetings.

CHAPTER VII: THE HEALING OF THE CHURCH

AND THE NATION

Introduction.

This research has been concerned with looking at the root causes of the ethnic ideology in Rwanda. It has been shown that an accumulation of factors contributed to the impact of the crises. First, the unequal political system which prevailed in the "central core kingdom" had been imposed indiscriminately on the rest of the country by the tripartite leadership that ruled the country: the colonial authorities, the Catholic Missionaries and the Mwami. Second, the process of ethnisation has developed through the formulation and implementation of discriminatory policies in various domains. The population was continuously divided into superior and inferior races. It was systematically classified into separate races or 'castes' in the framework of the colonial rule (1900-1962). Third, the ethnisation of Rwandan social life culminated in the creation of hostility between the Bahutu and Batutsi ending in the 1959-1962 revolution which left society fractured.

During the post-independence period up to the 1990s, as far as the author is informed, the issue of reconciliation was neither raised by Church leaders nor politicians. Thus, when the regime in power (1973-1994) faced the pressure from both outside and inside; it prepared a campaign of violence to oppose the aspirations of political change manifested by the population. When the activities in the Churches resumed after the 1994 genocide and subsequent tragic events, a number of questions emerged: will the Churches assess the crisis and draw a lesson? And what will be the role of the laity? What relations will the Churches keep with the State? What role will the Churches have in society in the future?

Firstly, in many regards and through many forums⁸²⁵, the Churches have been criticised both from within and outside either for having abandoned its members and failed to proclaim a prophetic word during the times of turmoil, or for being associated with the previous regime. Moving faster than the hierarchy, some Christians and members of the Roman Catholic and Protestant clergy started to criticise the Churches but in many cases, did not make their self-criticism so as to discover new possibilities for a genuine reconciliation⁸²⁶.

⁸²⁵ These include notably the NPI, Christian organisations like ARTC, participants to the CPR meetings in Kigali, 1995 and 1996. See in particular, *Dialogue*, no 183, Brussels, May-June 1995, pp.85-88; *Dialogue* no 187, Brussels, November- December 1995, pp.55-58; *Dialogue* no 192, Brussels, August-September 1996, pp. 109-110.

⁸²⁶ In Nyundo, Butare, Cyangugu dioceses, and in some Protestant Churches. In the Butare diocese, the Service for Theological Animation (SAT) which started in 1990 and continued after the genocide has established itself as a pioneer in initiating a new model of peoples' participation, in elaborating a new language of faith and in forming new Christian leadership with the task of being the heralds of peace in their parishes, congregations and communes. Its services are being immensely solicited by the local government authorities in the formation of the volunteers of peace in their

Secondly, in that process, the laity played a key role in reflecting on a new form of evangelism, needed. Meanwhile in some Churches the dispute over power and leadership restarted. The security forces had to intervene to remind them of the necessity for order and discipline in society⁸²⁷.

A question that has always been raised is this: why did the Rwandan Churches fail to stop the genocide? What this thesis has highlighted is that Christianity and colonists appeared in Rwanda as conquering powers and spread heroic exploits of self-assertion by producing distorted images and narratives of the Rwandan society. Under the guise of 'christianising and civilising' the Church encouraged a process which damaged some of the essential factors of relational harmony (*Kiliziya yakuye kirazira*: the Church has abolished the interdicts) and left them old fashioned. Hence, some factors such as the mechanisms of resolving conflict and conciliation were abolished without offering alternative structures. Hence, society was left with people who belonged to a decaying traditional infrastructure without being offered strong spiritual and moral instruments in the new one.

Despite this, the society is not without some hope. Thus, in the following paragraphs, a number of proposals are made, for consideration by the wider Christian community to accompany the efforts already being made in Rwanda today. Firstly, the Churches should initiate a process of Confession and Repentance as a necessary step for the healing of society and the Churches. This implies identifying the causes of the crisis. Identification relates to remembrance which is part of our psycho-somatic, spiritual, historical and political life. It is also God's purpose that His people remember so that they become teachers whose life is rooted in the past and the present so as to prepare for the future.

If Rwandans do not remember, they will lose their history, and become rootless. At the same time, they will undervalue the genocide and its victims, martyrs and heroes; they will not learn from the lessons of history. It would be a mistake to pretend that a tragedy of the magnitude of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda would be forgotten or its images be removed from memories by simply ignoring its root causes. If the wounds are not healed, and the wrongdoers not psychologically, spiritually or socially brought to acknowledge guilt and regret it, then, all the conditions for the scars of the past conflict may easily be transmitted from one generation to another. This has been a trend in Rwandan society. The violent revolution of 1959 was a

communes and districts. Ntezimana, L., Interview, Detmold, December 1996; See also Ntezimana's intervention in Chimay, December 1997.

response to the injustices of the colonial and monarchical era which were not dealt with in the past. Equally, the wounds from the revolution were not healed, and recent tragedies have been a consequence of that.

Remembrance, however is not merely looking back into myth, cataclysms and tragedies. It must be linked to the present and the future. Remembering has value if it heals memories. That is to provide the opportunity to tell the story of the tragedy through a genuine dialogue from the perspectives of the victims and of the perpetrators of violence. In remembrance there is despair which comes from the experience of woundedness, pain, bitterness, accusations, unforgiveness and resentment. Such a resentment provokes hatred, despair and can exacerbate tensions for more conflicts. But to make remembrance become part of the healing process, resources which help people cope with their suffering and prevent any further crisis should be provided.

Henceforth, to heal the Church and the nation, this thesis suggests a five level process: firstly, a social constraint combining retributive and restorative justice; secondly, a spiritual dimension comprising confession, repentance and forgiveness as factors of reconciliation; thirdly, the healing of memories; fourth, the education for generations capable of questioning and addressing the issue of power; and fifth initiating a listening ecclesiology.

VII. 1. Churches, Guilt and Repentance: Some Precedents ?

During the twentieth century tragedies similar to what happened in Rwanda have occurred elsewhere in the world. The most infamous are the 1915 genocide of 1,5 million Armenians by the Turks and the holocaust of more than 6 million Jews by the Nazis. Other massacres on a genocide scale occurred also in Burundi in 1972 where more than 200,000 Bahutu were killed by the Micombero regime and most recently, thousands of Muslims and Croats in former Yugoslavia. In the countries that 'hosted' these tragedies (except Turkey), the majority of the population was Christian. In the heat of the war they either co-operated with the evil regime or kept silence. In the end they had to face their painful history, and the problem of denial, shame and guilt. The following examples, which may be of relevance to Rwanda, show how out of the confusion and destruction created by the evil ideologies, a small fraction of the Churches remained faithful to the Gospel and initiated peace actions which succeeded in raising hopes in the situations of uncertainty.

VII. 1.1 The German Churches

After the second World War, when millions of human beings, in particular the Jews, were exterminated in the name of Nazi ideology, the German Churches were faced with the issue of

⁸²⁷ In Kigali, the headquarters of the Pentecostal Church, the Temple was closed for more than three months because of internal leadership disputes which arose out of an attempt to replace Revd Nsanzurwimo who had left the country in 1994.

confession of guilt and repentance. According to Visser't Hooft,⁸²⁸ after the Second World War, the major task was reconciliation between Churches whose nations had been fighting each other. The estrangement between the nations was such that it would not be enough to admit in vague terms that the world was guilty. It was crucial for the Churches that gave support and credence to the National socialism ideology to explicitly repent.

From 1933 when Hitler was firmly entrenched in power, he began to implement his Nazi programmes published in 1924 in *Mein Kampf*. German Protestantism split between the confessing Church (opposed to Hitler) and the official Churches who compromised with the Nazi state. In October 1945 after the war, a World Council of Churches delegation met with the EKD Council. A special service was organised in the ruined city of Stuttgart in which some Church leaders accepted their guilt in a short but poignant declaration. They affirmed that the Nazis would not have done what they did if Christians had been 'true believers'. Pasteur Asmussen declared before the delegation: "I sinned against you and against God as a member of my nation because I did not show enough courage". In the end, a declaration of guilt was formulated by the German Christian leaders. They said:

C'est avec une profonde douleur que nous déclarons : par notre faute, une indicible souffrance s'est abattue sur beaucoup de peuples et de pays. Ce dont nous avons souvent témoigné dans nos paroisses, nous l'exprimons aujourd'hui au nom de toute l'église. Bien qu'ayant lutté, durant de longues années, au nom de Jésus-Christ contre l'esprit qui avait trouvé une expression effroyable dans le régime tyrannique du national-socialisme, nous nous accusons de n'avoir pas rendu un témoignage plus courageux, de n'avoir pas prié plus fidèlement, de n'avoir pas eu une foi plus joyeuse et un amour plus brûlant. Il faut maintenant à nos Eglises un commencement nouveau⁸²⁹.

The declaration provoked controversies inside Germany. But the authors insisted that it was the "first step which would lead Germany to find its place in the concert of nations"⁸³⁰. In the 1970s, President Heinemann, the sole layperson among the authors of the Confession, declared to the media that the repentance of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) had been a blessing to the German nation because it urged it to ask for forgiveness from the nations that suffered under its occupation. Heinemann's example was followed by his successors and the German Chancellors⁸³¹.

⁸²⁸ Visser't Hooft, W., *Memoirs*, London: SCM Press Philadelphia/ The Westminster Press, 1973.

⁸²⁹ Ibid. p.192.

⁸³⁰ Message of the Prime Minister of Lower-Saxony to the World Lutheran Federation Assembly in 1952. As sign of repentance, immediate actions were launched. They included first, a National day of repentance held in November 1945. A special department was set up to judge war criminals. Since 1945, 5,445 cases were convicted, 7000 further suspected while it was believed 6000 more lived under assumed names. Through a Treaty agreed in 1952, German accepted to pay in form of goods worth three billion Dutch-Marks to the state of Israel and a compensation of US \$ 11,000 million to Jews who returned to Germany. See, Frost, B., *Politics of Peace*, London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1991, p. 27. See also Shriver Jr., D., *An Ethic for Enemies*, Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, pp.78ff.

⁸³¹ Chancellor Adenauer of Germany met with President de Gaulle of France in 1963 and signed a Treaty which normalised relations between them. Chancellors Willi Brandt, Helmut Kohl committed the German people to face freely and truly their responsibility. President Richard von Weizsäcker said to Germans before the Jewish survivors in Bergen-Belsen (where 100.000 died) in a commemoration ceremony that their forefathers have left them a grave legacy. "All of us, whether guilty or not, whether young or old, must accept the past". Shriver Jr., D., op.cit. p.110.

Both German Protestantism and the Ecumenical Movement benefited from the German confession. In the words of Visser't Hooft : "It would have been impossible to create the necessary spiritual conditions for the inauguration of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam in 1948 without the Stuttgart declaration"⁸³².

VII. 2. Repentance and Reconciliation in Rwanda

In Rwanda, the process which led to the conflict and the 1994 genocide has been traced through various responsibilities including the ethnologic, colonial and missionary meta-narratives as well as, unquestionably Rwandan elites. The International community share a part of shame because the UN had in Rwanda over 2500 UN Blue helmets troops super equipped during the tragic events of 1994. In many cases they stood and watched as the innocent people were slaughtered. The 1994 tragedy deepened the fracture of society and raised the issue of Reconciliation. Due to the above responsibility, a precise question arises of knowing who reconciles with whom and from what perspective, since various parties contributed to the crisis?

In Rwandan society reconciliation was a process in which a third party, namely a mediator, would play a key role. The mediator must be a good character; his/her life must be marked with abnegation and truth searching. She/he must be known by all as a living example of virtues, patient and discrete when dealing with sensitive issues or people. She/he must be capable of incarnating and interpreting the suffering of the victims, but at the same time be able to listen to and interpret the motives of the guilty so as to accompany both parties in the re-establishment of new and harmonious relationships.

This role as it appears, is the task of moral forces present in each society, including the Churches. But in the case of the Rwanda, the Churches have been rather instrumental in the process of the control of power. If then, the Churches want their role as spiritual and moral forces to be

⁸³²Visser't Hooft, W., op.cit. p. 194. See also **Confession of culpability of the United Church of Christ in Japan (Kyodan)**.

...During the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the United Church of Christ in Japan (Kyodan) in 1966, the participants felt it indispensable to denounce the crimes committed in their name when their government, in the name of the necessity of the war, appealed to the union of all the religious associations and their co-operation in favour of the war as national policy.

"The Church as 'light of the world and salt of the earth' shouldn't tie itself to the war. For the love of our nation, we should rather have correctly judged the behaviour of our country in a careful consideration of our Christian consciousness. Rather we have published a declaration in our country and abroad in which we approved and backed the war. We prayed for the victory. When our country committed faults, we have, as Church sinned with him. We have neglected our role to be 'watchmen/women'. At present, we confess this sin with deep pain in our hearts, and implore our Lord, the countries of the world in particular in Asia, the brother and sisters members of different Churches, and people of our nations to forgive us".

The Declaration was signed by Masahisa Suzuki, Moderator on 26 March 1967. in *Unité Chrétienne. Condamnés et Réconciliés*, no 77, Lyon, 1985. p. 68/69

rehabilitated so as to become a trustful mediator, they ought to confess their own guilt and repent.

VII. 2.1. Call for Repentance in Rwanda

There has been a debate whether the Churches would pursue their activities as if nothing had happened to Rwanda. For many, including the new government created after the genocide in July 1994 which claims to be different from the previous regime, Churches were part of the MRND regime. If then they wanted to play any moral role, they ought to confess guilt and repent. Within the Churches too many voices, from individuals and groups, call the Churches for Repentance. The Butare Diocesan Commission for the re-launch of pastoral activities (CRAP) interprets the Rwandan tragedy as being the product of the Christian 'rack and ruin', (la 'débandade chrétienne'). The degradation in moral values evident amongst and between Christians from all of the Churches has affected the fabric of society. Both the hierarchy and the clergy have been incapable of witnessing to what they were "celebrating and teaching"⁸³³.

Father Muzungu says that the Church should abandon its discourse encapsulated in the expression "we have done everything that is possible. The reality is appalling: the genocide, the crimes against humanity, the ordeal of the populations and a national hatred propaganda in the media"⁸³⁴. From the laity community, a vindictive 36 page memorandum was sent to the Pope in March 1996 by 24 well known personalities charging the Catholic Church for having been not only a vehicle of ethnic ideology, but also of negativism⁸³⁵.

Likewise, the Protestant Churches, in several meetings organised by the Protestant Council of Rwanda (CPR) together with the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC)⁸³⁶, the participants invited the Churches to "publicly confess their failure, actions and omissions during the development of the ideology of the genocide". In one meeting, the participants declared:

the genocide constitutes a failure not only for the Church in Rwanda but for the universal Church. They must acknowledge their share of responsibility in the genocide, repent, ask humbly for forgiveness and make reparation. It must break with its routine show of stereotyped rites and symbols and undergo real and far-reaching changes including asking the media, the ecumenical and international bodies to stop locking the people of Rwanda into the Hutu-Tutsi boxes.⁸³⁷

⁸³³ Dialogue, no 187, Dec. 1995, pp 55-58.

⁸³⁴ Muzungu, B., *Interview in Kigali*, March 1997. See also his articles in Cahier, no 1 1995; "La thérapie de la vérité" in La Lumière no 12.

⁸³⁵ For them, Mbyirukira & Al., "Rwanda. Préoccupations sur l'attitude de l'église Catholique Face a l'Evolution Socio-Politique du Pays Après le Génocide", Kigali: Mars 1996. Collection of the author, pp. 33/34.

⁸³⁶ CPR : Conseil Protestant au Rwanda ; AACC: All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC). More than a hundred participants including Church leaders, youth and women organisations as well as leaders of ecumenical organisations. Church leaders included the General Secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches, Revd Jose Chipenda, and the Church leaders of the Protestant Churches.

⁸³⁷ A three days conference organised in Kigali (4 to 7 March 1997) by the same Protestant Council with some Roman Catholic participants on the theme "Christianity Before, During and After the Genocide in Rwanda". CPR, "Les Eglises Protestantes du Rwanda sortent du Silence". Recommandations du Séminaire de Kabusunzu, Kigali, 4 au 6 Mars 1997. In *Bâtissons*, no 9, Janvier- Février 1997, p.2.

These feelings of many Protestants have been summarised by Revd Hitimana as follows: "nous sommes une génération des gens qui ont échoué. Il nous faut des gens neufs avec une nouvelle vision pour aider l'église à se transformer"⁸³⁸.

VII. 2.2. Repentance: An Unavoidable Mandate.

Though, the act of confessing and repenting is not new in Christian tradition, it has always raised controversy in modern tragic history of some nations. When the 1945 Stuttgart Confession mentioned before was published, it provoked huge controversy. People like J.Moltmann⁸³⁹, saw in it an 'insult' which led him and many others to claim their German identity. For Moltmann, Reconciliation was still remote, because, on the one hand, a person who admits his guilt and complicity becomes vulnerable, defenceless and weighed down in such way they can no longer determine their action; and on the other, the victims have a "better memory than the wrongdoers". For that very reason, the Confession of guilt, according to Moltmann, has no end⁸⁴⁰. Eberhard Bethge, a prominent theologian and a Church leader criticised the document for the "tone of self-justification" which he would never apply if it does not mention the crimes committed by the Allied forces. In addition, Bethge saw the Confession as having a depoliticising character, 'unfortunately dangerous' because it was the same attitude which permitted the "totalitarians to take power over every sector of society"⁸⁴¹. It is also worth noticing that the Confession was criticised for being notoriously general, notably for its failure to identify the crimes of the Nazis era, and even not mentioning anti-Semitism and the Holocaust.

In specifying the details of the crimes and repenting for having failed to do anything possible to prevent the genocide, the Rwandan authors of the Detmold Confession (presented below in section VII.2.6) aimed to avoid the danger of generalisation and self-justification. But then, its detailed identification was regarded as naive and endangering the "incriminated" group. As in the German case, some believe that unless crimes committed in both camps were put on the balance,

⁸³⁸ Interview with Revd N. Hitimana in Butare, April 1997. Revd Hitimana was the first leader of the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda, succeeding to missionaries from 1963 he run the Church up to 1977. He was interviewed as a district president and vice-president of his Church as well as Chairman of the Protestant Council of Rwanda. See also NPI: New Park Initiative: a group of Christian leaders who attempted successfully to arrange talks for reconciliation in South Africa between the ANC and Inkhata. Ecumenical participants including Church leaders, members of clergy and laypersons from Rwanda and outside said that the Church had a unique role in the reconstruction of Rwanda provided it would confess and repent of its omissions and misconceptions of its mission. NPI. "Le Rôle de l' Eglise dans la Reconstruction du Rwanda". *Declaration of Ashburham*. In *Dialogue No 192*, Aout-Septembre, 1996, pp 109-110.

⁸³⁹ Jurgen Moltmann is a prominent Protestant Theologian. He was prisoner of war in Glasgow. See Shriver Jr, D., op.cit., p.85.

⁸⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 87.

⁸⁴¹ Shriver Jr., D., op.cit. pp. 87; 84-89. See also Tschuy, op.cit. pp. 18; 21.

there would be no reason to confess and repent. Others see in the confession a 'dangerous legacy' which will weigh on future generations.

The discussion around the Detmold Confession points to the reality that the road towards reconciliation in Rwanda still has many obstacles. Schreiter's analysis may be used to suggest obstacles which must be overcome to reach a genuine reconciliation in Rwanda⁸⁴². The first obstacle to avoid is to consider reconciliation as a hasty search for peace, that comes from either the initiators of violence who have many wrong acts to cover up or from naive outsiders willing to restart from an idealistic situation. Such an approach ignores the examination of the causes of the suffering, and wants to deal with reconciliation by suppressing the memories and the experiences of suffering of the victims.

A second trap to avoid is that of considering reconciliation as an alternative to liberation. In such an approach, those engaged take reconciliation as a kind of appeasement that closes the eyes and ears to the cries and the suffering of the people in search of harmony and unity. If, in Rwanda, the causes and sources of violence are not named, examined and eliminated, there will be little chance of reaching reconciliation. A genuine approach should have for originality to bring people to a re-encounter through a genuine dialogue-transformation during which they would discover the factors of the blindness and oppression being ideological, political and historical which led them to conflict.

In fact, with few exceptions, there has been a reciprocal indifference to the suffering of large sections of the population in both communities. The ruling class ignored the suffering of the Bahutu before 1959; similarly, in the post-independence period, with few exceptions, the Bahutu ruling class has become the new oppressors who ignored the suffering of the Batutsi. The authors of the Detmold Confession wanted to overcome that difficulty by trying, first, to encounter the suffering of the one another and second, by committing themselves in a project aiming to stop the conflict before it becomes an intergenerational evil.

The theologians who published Road to Damascus suggested that Christians have been deaf to the call of God and blind to his presence among the people⁸⁴³. Paragraphs 45 and 56 of that document illustrate adequately the Rwandan context: the prophetic mission of the church is at stake for not having been challenged by the situation of the poor and oppressed on the one hand, and on the other, for having chosen the side of the privileged and the powerful.

⁸⁴²Schreiter, R., Reconciliation: Mission and Ministry in a Changing Order, Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis, 1992, p.26.

⁸⁴³ Institute for Contextual Theology, Road to Damascus: Kairos and the conversion, Braamfontein, 1989.

The last danger to avoid, is to manage reconciliation as a 'social science discipline' with a mediator trying to recognise a minimum of dignity in each of the antagonists. Reconciliation is a gift from God, a spiritual attitude which helps to re-unite those who were aliens, separated from each other by conflict with the purpose of restoring broken harmony. This means that in our search for reconciliation we must leave the door open to the unpredictable, the mystery of the grace of God. To enter such an atmosphere, people concerned have to be efficiently exposed to the word of God.

In Rwanda, some Christian communities including the Seventh Day Adventist Church perceive Reconciliation from such a 'spiritual' dimension. Christian leaders at national level are exposed to the message of the Bible in a series of conferences reflecting on the crisis, then requested to bring it to the congregations to question their relationship with God.⁸⁴⁴ Rugerinyange, a survivor of the genocide himself, thinks that the Church is holy and its teaching have persistently insisted on love and holiness; thus, individuals not the Church, should repent.

However, if precautions were not taken, the approach of the Seventh Day Adventist Church can slip into what this thesis has been arguing against, a pietist theology which 'depolitises' the life of the Churches, and avoids questioning the dehumanising systems. The relevance of such a process is best manifested in its potential as a spiritual model for encountering both God and the person wronged.

VII. 2.3. Confessing and Repenting so as to Be the Church

As indicated in the above examples the route to reconciliation was opened only after the Churches which had previously compromised with the political powers, confessed and repented. Likewise, it is when the Catholic Church implicitly acknowledged its inadequate attitude during the Jewish Holocaust, an attitude resulting from the so-called "Jewish culpability in the death of Christ" that the relations between Israel and Vatican improved. Observers still notice that the pastoral document on the Catholic Church's responsibility in the Jewish tragedy which was said to be under preparation at the death of Pope Pius XI in 1939, was forgotten by his successor, Pope Pius XII and only became available on 16 of March 1998⁸⁴⁵.

⁸⁴⁴ Rugerinyange, A., (President of Rwanda Mission Union) , *Interview*, Kigali, March 1997. For him, "the failure has been apparent even among those who were believed to be firmly committed. That is why people are invited to bring messages referring to Biblical teaching about the tragedy and then to debate them in groups. The messages are intended to comfort those who stand in the middle, groaning because of the suffering of people of God, and the extremists in both communities. We want to reach all our 270.000 members in one year's time because we know not the time of the Lord's second coming". Rugerinyange, A., *Interview*, Kigali, March 1997.

⁸⁴⁵ The document entitled: "Souvenons-nous: Une Reflexion sur la Shoah" was published on Monday 16 March 1998 by the Pontifical Secretariat for Dialogue with non Christians which is headed by the Australian Cardinal, Cassidy. Not only, the Catholic Church did not apologise, but it rejected the Catholic responsibility in the tragedy; it does not specify why Pope Pius XII kept silence during the Holocaust. Around the world, leading figures among the Jewish community manifested their general disappointment. *Libération* Dairy newspaper of 18 March 1998.

Meanwhile, Pope John Paul II had invited the Catholic Church to face the "state of guilt as an act of loyalty and courage which reinforces our faith which helps to perceive today's temptations and difficulties so as to be prepared to confront them"⁸⁴⁶. Responding to such an appeal, the French Catholic hierarchy, recently made the most poignant, direct and clear confession and repentance ever made by a Roman Catholic Church as far as this author is informed. They confessed and repented as follows:

Aujourd'hui nous confessons que ce silence fut une faute. Nous reconnaissons aussi que l'église en France a alors failli à sa mission d'éducatrice des consciences et qu'ainsi elle porte avec le peuple Chrétien la responsabilité de n'avoir pas porté secours des les premiers instants quand la protestation et le protection étaient possibles et nécessaire. Cette défaillance de l'église de France et sa responsabilité envers le peuple juif font partie de son histoire. Nous confessons cette faute. Nous implorons le pardon de Dieu et demandons au peuple juif d'entendre cette parole de repentance⁸⁴⁷.

With regard to Rwanda, the Pope referred to the 1994 genocide as 'inter-ethnic killings' in his homily in Uhuru Park in Kenya⁸⁴⁸. He later invited those, individual members of the Church who committed crimes to be judged by the state justice. As far as the institution is concerned, the Rwandan bishops have also implicitly admitted in their pastoral letter of Christmas 1994 that the Church has been close to the political powers; but they failed to face up to their guilt.

For the Churches of Rwanda nothing can hide their legitimisation of the political powers both colonial and republican and their silence before the abuse of Human Rights. Like the French Church, the silence and collusion of the Rwandan Churches with violent regimes require confession and repentance.

Reflecting on the absence of the Churches' stand in favour of human rights, the Camerounian Theologian J-M.Ela raised appropriate questions regarding "how the Churches are to be the Church of Christ in those countries where bloody tyrants celebrate countless murders, exterminating the harmless, voiceless population..... Where human beings are delivered over to unheard of suffering, despair, and slow death by fire, the Church should make the voice of the

⁸⁴⁶ Eglise de France., *Le Repentir. Déclaration de l'Eglise de France*, Paris: Descellée de Brouwer, 1997, p.15.

Among the few Church hierarchies who had spontaneously manifested the need for the Catholic Church to repent immediately after the World War, was Bishop Grober, Archbishop of Fribourg. He had been one of the rare voices who denounced the Nazis crimes facing their anger. In the pastoral published on 8 May 1945, he wrote:

"My God, what ignominy have we accumulated during the last 13 years! What pain for me to have to talk of it in public and as I try to divert from my thinking and sights, to not see the shame and dishonour of my own people! Helas! Now the defeat has revealed everything, its not possible to hide them from the blinding light of the sun and the eyes of the horrified world which condemn them. Isn't now our task to expiate the crimes committed and to pray for thousands of those who have been assassinated". In *Condamnés et Réconciliés*, no 77, Lyon, 1985.

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid. p.29.

⁸⁴⁸ That unfortunate expression used in the Homily of Pope John Paul II at Uhuru Park, Nairobi/ Kenya on 19 September 1995 raised controversy between the Rwandan government and the Catholic Church. The Minister of Foreign Affairs said that "the Rwandan Government of National Union would have wished a word of comfort from the Pope and a condemnation of the crimes against humanity committed by the first 'African Nazis' instead of wrongly referring to Hutu-Tutsi conflict which was rather the expression of the policy of a dictatorial fascist regime". The Apostolic Nuncio in Rwanda declared that the 'Standard' Newspaper of Nairobi reported the homily in terms that had not been used by the Pope, i.e. "Hutu" and "Tutsi".

Gospel heard out of respect for human beings"⁸⁴⁹. Ela pioneers what he calls 'Conscientizing evangelisation' which is to try to "share the destiny of the marginalised peasants" in bringing "attention to the tragic situation of these people who were condemned long ago to ignorance, poverty and oppression"⁸⁵⁰. B. Rordorf follows the same line and set up an ethical agenda of a human being in society. He defines being human as a "heritage of physical and psychological characteristics that urges us to care for our existence, to give sense to humanity and to become responsible for each other because in our encounter with each other we gain something of which we are redeemable"⁸⁵¹.

VII. 2.4. Protestant Responses to the Call for Repentance

The Churches and Christian organisations have responded differently to the call for repentance. Within the institutional level, there are at least three tendencies. Some Church leaders, including the Catholic hierarchy consider the call for repentance as a political agenda aiming to force them to admit sins, even those they did not commit, so as to silence them. Others, especially, the new leaders within the Protestant denominations, have manifested the desire to publicly confess and repent the guilt of their predecessors. Another fraction believe that the Churches must repent but found the governmental pressure unacceptable. On both the Catholic and Protestant sides, some individuals and ecclesial communities have taken initiatives such as seminars to reflect on the root causes of the tragedy and have taken a step forward to repent of their incapacity to stand for the truth while others still remain silent.

VII. 2.4.1. AEE Seminars: Hanging Pains on the Cross

The most consistent body from a Protestant background has been the African Evangelical Enterprise (AEE) which pioneered the organisation of seminars on repentance and forgiveness from September 1994. The seminars have been conducted by a Welsh medical Doctor, Rhiannon Lloyd who specialised in counselling⁸⁵². Dr Lloyd has a simple methodology: participants, Church people, ministers and elders meditate on repentance and forgiveness, exchange their pains, faults and failings with each other in groups. Then to get relief and release, they hang their pains on the cross with nails and hammer. The session is interspersed with the singing of hymns centred on the theme of Christ destroying the walls of separation. Dr Lloyd has been spiritually supported in her ministry by a world-wide intercessory prayer group. Later in 1997, she handed

⁸⁴⁹ Ela, J-M., *My Faith as an African*, Maryknoll, New York/London: Orbis Books/ Geoffrey Chapman, Translation from French, 1985, p.8.

⁸⁵⁰ Ibid. p.9.

⁸⁵¹ Rordorf, B., "Le Sens Humain de la Culpabilité". In *Condamnés et Réconciliés* no 77, Lyon, 1977, p.11.

⁸⁵² From a Welsh background, Dr Lloyd said that she observed the Anglo-Welsh relations of oppression and frustration and came to the conclusion that trauma heals when treated from the spiritual perspective. Lloyd, R., *Witness in Detmold*, Dec. 1996.

her work to a team of three nationals who, according to reports received, continued to perform with the same energy.

AEE's seminars and conferences are organised in different cities and Churches; despite many difficulties,⁸⁵³ the initiative has contributed valuably to the spiritual recovery of Christian leaders. Assessing the first term seminars in 1997 held in Rwamagana, Kigali, Bugesera, Kigeme, Butare, Gisenyi and Ruhengeri. Dr Rhiannon wrote:

The seminar for Church leaders in Bugesera last week was very difficult. Over half the people present had recently returned from camps in Tanzania or Zaire. This is changing the dynamics. People are much more suspicious of us and each other and it's hard work to build trust. There seemed to be a lot of underlying hostility. However, during the workshop with the cross the atmosphere changed and many were deeply touched by God. We realise we need more time to wrestle with the issues of forgiveness. We have decided to extend the seminars by an extra day. We really need wisdom! How do we tackle this subject effectively? Extending forgiveness in this situation is very emotional. We can't begin to imagine how difficult it must be for someone to forgive the very person who killed their entire family and is now back in town⁸⁵⁴.

The passage underlines the fact that there is still mistrust among people. On the one hand, the wounds remain fresh and visible. Insisting on forgiveness seems to be a precipitated process designed to stop them from breathing. On the other hand, suspecting some organisations of continuing to intoxicate the population with hatred, some authorities have shown a heavy presence which could affect the ambience of the meetings.

Examining the varied feedback given and also how to reach a real therapy of society, Antoine Rutayisire, the AEE leader said that there was progress but not as yet a true process of repentance. Firstly, people remain in the Protestant stereotypes of repenting of minor sins. People do not yet recognise the offence so as to express themselves and to accept the reality of the therapy. Secondly, the judiciary system acts like the sword of Damocles which may hinder repentance⁸⁵⁵. Would it be acceptable to unconditionally welcome the guilty who recognise their offence so as eventually - as in the prodigal son case- to invite them later to change their behaviour.

A second Protestant independent initiative comes from a group of Christians who launched a daily campaign of evangelism among young people and the working class of the capital. From 12.00 to 14.00 (period of break in Rwandan administration), hundreds of people gather at the *Inkuru Nziza* headquarters⁸⁵⁶ in the Kigali city-centre where they are exposed to messages from fundamentalist evangelists, mainly expatriates of the born-again model⁸⁵⁷.

⁸⁵³ Difficulties include: differences in their education level; insecurity in some regions; suspicions among the population and the refugees who had returned from Zaire and Tanzania. Some authorities had also suspected that AEE team had a hidden agenda.

⁸⁵⁴ Lloyd, R. "Seminars on Repentance and Forgiveness" in progress. Internal Report, June 1997.

⁸⁵⁵ Rutayisire, A., *Interview* in Kigali, March 1997.

⁸⁵⁶ A conservative mission from America which has a single parish in Kigali from early 1960s. See our chapter on media.

⁸⁵⁷ On Thursday, the 27 March 1997 the rally was addressed by a German native, Wolfgang Heiner, who runs "Partnership in Mission" organisation and has been interested in the East Africa Revival, in particular organising team visits from Germany to Africa.

The campaign has had an impact, in particular among young people; it appeased the fear of uncertainty for many, but still cannot bring a real healing to society. As it is indicated below, both repentance and forgiveness are possible if the victim are helped to tell their stories of suffering and if the guilty are willing to identify their evil deed and ask for forgiveness.

The question arises, how can an outsider, not imbued in the local culture, hopes to have an understanding of the situation, so as to bring Rwandans to adopt the changes needed for repentance. The renewal of Rwanda, this writer suggests, can only emerge out of the commitment of a well trained local leadership, who, as in the case study of South Africa, transcend the ethnic divide towards mutual understanding and encounter.

VII. 2.4.2. Presbyterian Church : First Church to Repent

On the institutional level, the lead has been taken by the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda during her annual General Synod in Kigali, 10 to 15 December 1996. The Synod confessed and repented before God and all the Rwandan nation for the omissions and failure of the Church to oppose or denounce the genocide and massacres either during their public preparation or during their execution. The Synod called on Christians around the world to denounce and oppose murder of any kind and to resist ethnicism:

Dear Rwandans and Christians, the time has come to proceed to a self-criticism because the Church of God is ashamed of having been incapable of opposing or denouncing the preparation and the execution of the genocide. As God's servant Nehemiah did (Neh 1.5-11), so we, the Synod, in the name of the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda's members, repent and ask forgiveness before God and the nation because of the weakness and the lack of courage shown when it was necessary. The Synod asks the people of Rwanda and the world-wide Christian family to oppose any form of rejection of God's will for His creatures, to denounce and resist strongly ethnicism, regionalism and religious divisions. For God there is no Jew, Greek, Hutu, Tutsi nor Twa. We all are one in Christ⁸⁵⁸.

Though the Presbyterian Church is relatively small⁸⁵⁹ and the impact of its message is proportionate to its influence, what matters is the significance and the precedent of this act, firstly for the victims and secondly for the guilty and the nation as a whole. How best could the repentance of the Church move the conscience of many? On the impact of the confession from the ethical, political and evangelical point of views, the new president of the Presbyterian Church

⁸⁵⁸ Bâtissons, no 10, Janvier 1997, p.2. The message in Kinyarwanda says in substance: "Banyarwanda, Banyarwandakazi namwe mwese bayobokeye b'Imana, igihe kirageze cyo kwinegura kubera ko Itorero ry'Imana ryakozwe n'isoni bitewe n'amarorerwa yo gutsemba ikiremwa-muntu aricyo "SHUSHO Y'IMANA" yabaye mu gihugu cyacu Itorero rikabigiramo intege nkeya ntiribashe kubuza cyangwa se kwamagana ku mugaragaro ibikorwa nk'ibyo.... Nkuko umugaragu w'Imana Nehemiya yabikoze mu gice cya 1:5-11 mu izina ry'abakristo bose b'Itorero Peresibiteriyeni Sinode isabye Imana n'Abanyarwanda bose imbabazi. Kubera izo ntege nke, n'ubuhamya bwabuze ibihe bwari bukenewe. Isabye abakristo bose bo mu Rwanda no ku isi yose kurwanya byimazeyo ubwicanyi uko bwaba buri kose n'ikindi kintu cyose kinyuranye n'ubushake bw'ijambo ry'Imana. Synode iboneyeho kandi gusaba abakristo n'Abanyarwanda bose kwamagana no kwirinda ibyaha by'irondakoko, irondakarere, n'amacakubiri ashingiye ku madini. Ijambo ry'Imana ritwigisha ko mu bubaha Imana ari nta Muyuda nta Mugiriki, nta mugabo nta mugore, nta Muhutu, nta Mututsi cyangwa se umutwa kuko twese turi umwe muri Kristo".

⁸⁵⁹ In comparison, it claims 200,000 members while, the Roman Catholic Church has almost four million out of the 7 1/2 million Rwandans (pre-genocide statistics).

said that the Church must agree to repent of its involvement in the rooting of ethnic ideology⁸⁶⁰. How can this de-ethnisation be facilitated, what are its principles? All these aspects will be debated in further sections.

VII. 2.5. Catholic Responses to Call for Repentance

Different dynamics within the Catholic Church dioceses have generated signs of hope for an eventual process of repentance. In the Butare diocese, the Service of Theological Animation (SAT) mentioned above is widely involved in establishing the expression of faith in the daily lives of Christians. According to L. Ntezimana, leader of the SAT, the core principles of the training are twofold: 1. to initiate a new language of faith, that is to relate the content of Christian faith to the daily reality of people; 2. to cement unity between different members of the Christian community. The Service pursues its activities in training nucleus of peace called AbakambaziMana⁸⁶¹.

For Ntezimana, the Gospel (sermon, liturgy, sacraments, devotion) which is the engine, has turned, but history (economics, politics, culture, society) which is the moving part never followed. That is because there was no engaging clutch. In fact the living stones, the Church's members lacked connections between themselves. The Church was made up of "crowds which come into the Church on Sunday who are easily manipulated and some committed personalities who are easily neutralised"⁸⁶².

Yet, for some prominent members of the Catholic hierarchy, the call for repentance is perceived as a political agenda aiming to silence them. The Church, they say, is being forced to confess and repent the sins, even those they did not commit. If they do it, they would put them in a trap. They will not have any more say about the evident human rights abuse in the new regime.

This position is reflected in the ambivalence which characterises the messages of the bishops published after the 1994 tragedy and subsequent tragic events. These included the 1994 Christmas and New year pastoral letter, the pastoral priorities (1995), and other messages to the government⁸⁶³. In that pastoral letter called "Love Your Neighbour", the bishops condemned the massacres and appealed to repentance. They wrote: "people have been killed because of their ethnic and regional origin or political opinion... Some people behaved like wild animals:

⁸⁶⁰ "Most importantly", Dr Karamaga said, "the Church must participate in the 'de-ethnisation' of society; it must no longer reason in ethnic line but invite people to cross community boundaries". Karamaga, A., *Interview*, Kigali, March 1997.

⁸⁶¹ Abakambazimana (ABKZ):literarly, those who implore God (Noyaux Générateurs de Paix), the Peace Volunteers in the communes and parishes. In May 1997, 58 Peace Volunteers were sent by the Bishop of Butare to minister in the 18 parishes of the diocese. Ntezimana, L., *Interview* at Detmold, December 1996; *Interview* at Butare, March 1997; see also SAT, *Rapport d'Activités* (Juillet 1996-10 Mars 1997), p.4.

⁸⁶² Ibid. p. 3-4.

⁸⁶³ I refer the reader to the two meetings of the Protestant Council held in 1995 and 1997 in which some Catholics participated. During our inquiry none could confirm if any effort was made to explore the possibilities of pursuing co-operation on public issues.

exposing proudly their atrocities, even refusing to stop the killings. Under the pretext of anger, people took the freedom to kill"⁸⁶⁴. Then with their habitual imperative formula, the bishops invited the criminal to repent:

Et vous qui avez commis des délits, Dieu vous invite au repentir. Considérez les méfaits du péché qui a plongé les pays dans des cris de douleur; à travers le pays beaucoup de Rwandais en ont été les victimes et nous avons été objet de réprobation à la face du monde⁸⁶⁵.

The bishops refer to individual crimes whose authors must personally repent but reject the idea of confession and repentance in the name of the Catholic Church as an institution. At Christmas 1995 and New Year 1996 they pursued the same line of thinking. 'The country', they said, "has been destroyed by sin", adding that "we all have sinned against God. We thus have to repent to receive the sacrament of reconciliation"⁸⁶⁶. However, the bishops did not formulate any word of repentance. They did not take any clear position on ethnic problems, the monopoly of power, ignorance of the masses as well as what, according to them, some people have considered as "alleged mistakes in evangelism" identified by some people, according to them as the "causes of the genocide and massacres". They preferred to leave it "to those who have time and competence" to analyse how much these factors had contributed to the genocide. The bishops, instead, justified the secular collaboration between the missionaries and the authorities as having been inspired by the founder of the order of the White Fathers as being in the best interests of the population. As one can see, this was a nice general statement with "we all sinned", which does not specify the particular institutional sin.

This attitude has led some observers to think that the Church is ignoring or minimising the genocide. For some people the hierarchy is losing contact with reality in behaving as if the tragedy did not happen. Father Mungwarareba said that there is a "muteness in the summit which contrasts with life in the base"⁸⁶⁷.

Another fraction which includes people like Father Bh., believes that the Church has enough sins to repent for but at the same time, finds the government's attitude, which seems to associate the Churches with the former regime, as a threat to such a confession and repentance⁸⁶⁸. Like Bh., Father Rutumbu, though acknowledging that "the Catholic hierarchy was gangrened by the ethnic virus which marked them more than their baptism, their priestly and religious life", ⁸⁶⁹ perceives a political and ideological agenda behind the call for repentance. For him, the RPF regime is

⁸⁶⁴ Eglise Catholique, Conférence des évêques., *Message de Noël 1994 et de Nouvel An 1995*, p.5.

⁸⁶⁵ Idem. *Priorités Pastorales pour la Période d'après-guerre*, Kigali: Pallotti-Press, January 1995.

The Bishops committed themselves to recommence hosting the seminars on human rights and democracy which were organised by NGOs and human rights organisations including OXFAM, ADL, Centre Iwacu, Ardes. See discussion on the matter in chapter Five.

⁸⁶⁶ *Dialogue No 189*, February-April 1996, p.89-107.

⁸⁶⁷ Mungwarareba, M., *Interview in Detmold*, December 1996.

⁸⁶⁸ Bh., *Interview in Kigali*, March 1997.

⁸⁶⁹ Rutumbu, J., op.cit. pp.73/4.

forcing the Church to repent even for the crimes it did not commit, so that it finds the pretext to silence it⁸⁷⁰.

This line of thinking follows the new Archbishop of Kigali, Mgr T.Ntihinyurwa's idea. "Some politicians", he says, "want to nail what they consider as the lost sheep, on the feet of the wall". In other words, the pressure bears a strategy to push them to confess guilt, thus compromising its power to speak out. For the archbishop, "the Church acknowledges that the genocide happened, but the counter-genocide also took place". For that very reason it is too early to make a confession because that would not help all the parties to mourn their victims. Will the Church then wait for a consensus before it confesses, this writer asked?

As a Christian I confess and pray for all the Christians. Concerning the confession, due to extremism in different sides, one must be sure they were not being misinterpreted. Although I know things must go in that direction, I note that a confession would not make sense if it does not help all the Rwandans. It is only when all will understand that a Twa widow is as good as a Tutsi or a Hutu widow, then a confession will make sense. If a confession was to be made it must start from the recognition of each other crimes. But today, when a Tutsi confesses they are attacked for forgetting that their kin died. When it is a Hutu, they are accused of being blind about people who are dying now around the country⁸⁷¹.

However, amidst this controversy, in the Kabgayi diocese, after the genocide and massacres, the Administrative Apostolic, Father André Sibomana (interim bishop until March 1996)⁸⁷², in what he called 'la Pastorale de dialogue', requested that Christians who wanted to live the Gospel, renew their inscription in their parishes, have a personal encounter with the priest with regard to the tragedy and re-affirm in their own words: what they were looking for in religion as well as what must change in their life. Father Sibomana synthesised the 'declarations' in a pastoral letter which was distributed in November 1994 under the title "Convertissez-vous et Croyez à la bonne nouvelle"(Convert and believe in Good News). The message according to him, invited the Christian community in the diocese to manifest their will to be true Christians⁸⁷³.

This encounter with the priest, though it avoids the imposition of a personal confession, is a pedagogical process which, if appropriately managed, could lead to a self-examination and

⁸⁷⁰ Rutumbu finds that the hierarchy is denouncing the arbitrary imprisonment, the abuse of human rights, the rejection of democracy and opposing the on-going rewriting of Rwandan history of which the Catholic Church holds important documents in the archives of the Vatican and in the headquarters of the White Fathers. Rutumbu, J., *Dialogue no 195* Janvier 1997, p. 71. Rutumbu is a Biblicist, formerly lecturer in the Superior Seminar in Nyakibanda.

⁸⁷¹ Ntihinyurwa, T. (Mgr), *Interview in Kigali*, March 1997. In a memorandum of January 12, 1995 to the Minister of Justice, the bishops asked that the new regime apply the Arusha accord, put an end to arbitrary arrests, facilitates the restitution to their owners the properties and estates occupied by the army and close partners of the new authorities, and relieve the member of clergy under jails. Similarly, in his letter to the minister of Justice, the Apostolic Nuncio demanded the government to stop the damaging campaign against the Church through the media, the unjust accusations against the Church. For them the campaign aimed to hide the crimes committed against the Church such as the assassinations of the bishops and several members of the clergy. If the preceding regime lost its credibility before the international community, it was because of its abuse of human rights. Any other regime that adopts the same strategy would also destroy itself added the bishops. *Dialogue no 181*, Mars 1995

⁸⁷² Following the death of Bishop Thaddee Nsengiyumva, together with his colleagues, Bishop Vincent Nsengiyumva and Joseph Ruzindana and several priests, early June 1994. Journalist, director of the most influential Newspaper, Kinyamateka, activist of Human Rights who denounced energetically the abuse of human rights before and after the genocide, Sibomana, 43, died on 7 March 1997 in Kigali.

⁸⁷³ Sibomana, A., op.cit. p. 187.

confession. The Ruhango parish priest who exploited the appeal wrote: "Il ne s'agit pas d'une confession, il s'agit de débarrasser chacun de ce qu'il porte dans son coeur, du mal qu'il a pu faire, de parler de réparation et de restitution". After the encounter with the priest, the Christians- a first group of 5000 underwent the experience- participated in a celebration of Penance, Reconciliation and Eucharist⁸⁷⁴.

VII. 2.6. An Ecumenical Response: The Detmold Confession

In Detmold, Germany, a group of 24 Christians from various denominational backgrounds including Catholic Priests and Sisters, Protestant ministers and lay persons from Rwanda and elsewhere met from 7 to 12 December 1996 to pray and to meditate on the crisis with some Western Christians⁸⁷⁵. They came to the conclusion that Rwandan people would never be reconciled with each other unless each party agreed to humbly ask for forgiveness from their victims.

This conviction led to those present, from a Bahutu background, in the name of their group, repenting of all the atrocities committed during the genocide. The participants of the Batutsi background followed, on behalf of their group, repenting of the attitudes and deeds of the past which led to the hatred and fear of the Bahutu. The Europeans present, on behalf of the 'Bazungu' (Whites) repented for the discrimination and prejudices introduced among Rwandans and for supplying arms and abandoning the Rwandan people during the massacres and genocide. All three groups repented for marginalising the Batwa. The confession reads as follow:

1. We, Hutu Christians, present at Detmold, recognise that our group has oppressed the Tutsi in various ways since 1959. We confess the massacres committed by the Hutu against the Tutsi group at different periods of Rwandan history, culminating in the genocide of 1994. We are ashamed of the horrors and atrocities committed by the Hutu towards the Tutsi: torturing, raping, slitting pregnant women open, hacking humans to pieces, burying people alive, hunting people with dogs as if they were animals, killing in churches and temples (previously recognised as places of refuge), massacring old people, children and the sick in hospital, forcing people to kill their own relatives, burning people alive, denying burial and thousands of other ways of cynically degrading and mockingly putting to death.

We carry the terrible weight of this unspeakable crime and we accept to bear the consequences without resentment. We implore our Hutu brothers and sisters not to forget this terrible past when they judge the present reality in Rwanda. We humbly ask forgiveness of God and our Tutsi brothers and sisters for all the evil we have inflicted upon them. We commit ourselves to do whatever we can to restore our honour and dignity and to regain the lost humanity in their eyes.

The Batutsi group declared themselves comforted by the demand of forgiveness made by their Bahutu counterparts and likewise repented for the crimes of their group.

2) We, Tutsi Christians, present at Detmold, are happy and feel comforted by the confession and demand of forgiveness made by our brothers and sisters. We likewise ask God and the Hutu to forgive the repression and blind vengeance which members of our group have taken, surpassing all claims to legitimate self-defence. "Inkoni ikubise mukeba uyirenta urugo" (justifying evil on the pretext that it affects a rival, ends up by turning back on the person who justified it). We also ask God and our Hutu brothers and sisters forgiveness

⁸⁷⁴ Vleugels, J., "Le pardon est-il possible après le génocide? Réflexion pastorale". In *Dialogue* no 182, Avril 1995, pp. 36-54.

⁸⁷⁵ The initiative came from a Roman Catholic lay person, a Medical Doctor, Fulgence Rubayiza. A team of four, two Roman Catholic priests, Fathers P.C. Nkusi and Patrice Nzeyimana, two laypersons, Dr Rubayiza and the present writer co-signed the invitation to the meeting.

for certain arrogant and contemptuous attitudes shown to them throughout our history in the name of a ridiculous (sic) complex of ethnic superiority.

The Western Christians repented of their sense of "superiority" and the discrimination between people by generalising and judging some as good and others as bad; they regretted among other things that their countries condoned violence by delivering arms to all parties:

3) We, Western Christians present at Detmold regret that, feeling too sure of our superiority, we discriminated between people by generalising and judging some as good and others as bad. We regret that our countries have condoned violence by delivering arms to all parties. We regret our silence and our neglect of the refugees of the years of the independence. We also regret our silence and our abandoning of the Rwandan people during the genocide and massacres in 1994. We regret our silence and neglect when it was a question of finding a viable solution to the return of the refugees after the genocide. We regret our failure to listen and to share in the suffering experienced by our Rwandan friends. For all that harm, we ask God and our Rwandan brothers and sisters to forgive us for not respecting them as they are and we want to commit ourselves with Jesus to a path of listening, respect and solidarity.

Then altogether, they exhorted members of Rwandan society and the international community to feel equally concerned by each other's misery.

We exhort them to work together to comfort and rehabilitate all those who have been wounded by the Rwandan tragedy: widows, orphans, prisoners, refugees, both old and recent, homeless, and the marginalised Batwa. May everyone find recognition and respect in Rwanda and be rooted in the midst of brothers, sisters and friends. We thank the Father, who has given us his Spirit to break our "hearts of stone" and to free us from the mistrust and the fear which separated us. He has remade us brothers and sisters committed to the Way of His Son, who died and rose again to reconcile man to God and to one another⁸⁷⁶.

This confession has raised many inspiring remarks, many positive and some negative. A widow who survived the genocide in which all the members of her family and her husband died phoned this writer to say : "I couldn't believe that there are still Rwandans, Bahutu and Tutsi who could meet and produce a message of such a high sincerity".⁸⁷⁷ A Rwandan Roman Catholic nun said that the Confession was her "best Christmas gift".

A year later, the authors of the Confession met again in the Trappist Monastery of Chimay, Belgium, 27 to 31 December. They acknowledged warmly several hundreds of the signatories who ascribed to the Confession. The reactions included a letter from the Rwandan Government. The Prime Minister, P-C. Rwigema said that the confession would "give the strength and courage to Rwandans to respect each other and to live together in peace so far as we all accept and regret our offences in the search for forgiveness so as to build up a new Rwanda which would no longer know the abominable atrocities of 1994 ...It is encouraging that some expatriates participated and showed their contrition because of the failure of the international community to assist in the tragedy which affected Rwanda. They ought to bring to the attention of their states, public authorities and the rest of the population that they, indeed have a big debt to pay towards Rwanda and Rwandans"⁸⁷⁸.

⁸⁷⁶ Detmold Confession. In Rubayiza, F., *Confession de Detmold. Signe d'Espoir pour le Rwanda*, Detmold, Romerweg, Decembre, 1996; see also Dialogue, no 195, January 1997.

⁸⁷⁷ E.M., Message from Norwich University in December 1996.

⁸⁷⁸ Rwigema, P-C., "Réaction du Premier Ministre à la Confession de Detmold". In *Dialogue* no 199, Juillet- Août 1997, pp. 97/8.

The participants reflected also on the accusation according to which the Confession takes a whole group for being killers and the other the victims. For those who raise the issue the confession seems to incriminate a whole group. People killed, not because they were Bahutu or Tutsi, but because they were criminals, commented among others, Dr Karamaga.⁸⁷⁹ Henceforth, the confession would both endanger the lives of innocent people caught into the group incriminated and obstruct the state justice.

Some other criticisms saw the Bahutu repentant as being naive or underestimating the offences of the Batutsi. A former missionary in Rwanda, C.M. Overdulse, regretted that the Confession was unbalanced with "extremely moving and sincere details from the Bahutu not counterbalanced in the Batutsi group". He also suggested that westerners should confess misdeeds including the collusion between the missionaries and the colonisers; for the naive support provided by their governments for the RPF attack. Westerners he said, might confess the fact that for a "long time, missionaries of different Churches had underestimated the seriousness of the ethnic antagonism which was embedded and never questioned; that they avoided involving themselves in the political life of Rwanda arguing that politics was a dirty affair"⁸⁸⁰. A former member of the post-genocide Rwanda Cabinet greeted the initiative warmly, regretting however that there was a cover up of many injustices, and the grave oppression that led to the 1959 revolution. 'The repentant', he pursued, "underestimated the systematic revenge conducted by the victorious army, the RPF, on the defenceless population"⁸⁸¹.

From the point of view of the Detmold participants, many among the critics reject the Confession because their group or the group they have identified with crossed the Rubicon in acknowledging the offence committed by members of their community. Some among both groups do not accept that they have a responsibility in the tragedy which can be confessed and repented. As indicated above, the South African experience shows that the perpetrators of violence can be found not only among the dominant camp or the victorious but also those of the victims.

The authors never intended their confession to be used as a compromise or be negotiated between two or several parties. Though the confession resulted from a reflection on the socio-historical, political and moral crises that affected Rwanda, the participants have never pretended to have assessed fully the extent of the developments which led to the tragic events of Rwanda⁸⁸².

⁸⁷⁹ Karamaga, A., *interview* in Kigali, March 1997.

⁸⁸⁰ Overdulse, C., "Réflexion sur la Confession de Detmold". In *Exchange* Vol. 26.3., Leiden, September 1997, pp.256-263.

⁸⁸¹ Sendashonga, S., "Pour le Pardon et la Justice". Réaction à la Confession de Detmold. In *Dialogue*, no 197. Mars-Avril 1997, pp. 44-50.

⁸⁸² It must be remembered that even the historical Stuttgart Confession of the Churches of Germany mentioned above which, as indicated above has been revered for its role in rehabilitating the Germans and their nation in the concert of nations, never referred to the socio-historical analysis, nor mentioned the Jewish holocaust.

Instead, the initiative envisions opening a process of repentance- identification which could generate the gift of grace for forgiveness from the victim so as to move towards reconciliation.

VII.3. Agenda: Weeping with Hope for Rwanda

The practical dimensions of the issues raised in the previous discussions can be summarised in one question: How and what should be done to re-establish a social harmony? The Detmold Confession created a precedent when the participants committed themselves to share in the burden of the crimes perpetrated by members of their respective groups. Such an 'organic solidarity' raises a number of issues such as the mandate they had to do it as well as the implications of such an identification.

VII. 3.1. Repentance, Forgiveness and Reconciliation

The magnitude of the tragedy goes beyond human understanding. If its root causes are not identified, confessed and repented for, the nation will rest its future on bitterness and rancour. The Bible shows that the history of human community began with murder when Abel, son of Adam and Eve, was killed by his brother, Cain. On the other hand, it shows successful attempts to stop intergenerational sins. Though, the law codes of the Old Testament mandate capital punishment, God did not impose death upon the first murderer. However, God did not leave Cain's crime unpunished. Cain was banished from living with human company "threatened, isolated, excluded fugitive, abandoned, hunted on the edge of decay and death".⁸⁸³ That, however, was not his fate because he married and had children.

The Bible tells the stories of brothers and sisters who suspected, envied, hated, fought or eliminated each other for various motives like shortage of resources, or inheritance, blessings, or according to Marx-Leninism, the domination of one class by another⁸⁸⁴. What is important in these stories is the re-establishment of the harmony. Among these, Jacob and Esau, Joseph and his brothers, all carry the notion of forgiveness as a social-political rule which is rare either in Old Testament or in politics.

Both stories embody rivalry, domination, trickery and alienation. Jacob gets Isaac's blessing at the detriment of his brother Esau. After a long period of separation the re-union of the two brothers happened on the background of spiritual encounter with God; confession, repentance and restorative justice⁸⁸⁵.

⁸⁸³ Dumas,A., *Théologiens Politiques et Vie Spirituelle de l'Eglise*, Paris: Chollet, 1977. p. 54.

⁸⁸⁴ Ibid. p.57.

⁸⁸⁵ "Now I am sending this message to my lord, that I may find favour in your eyes". "If I have found favour in your eyes, accept this gift from me. For to see your face is like seeing the face of God, now that you have received me favourably". See passages in Gn. chap. 22-30; 32.1-1; 32.5; 33.10.

Joseph and Benjamin accepted naively the favourite status of their father, Jacob; when their half brothers saw that, their hatred grew. This led to the plot to kill Joseph. But it was Reuben and Judah who saved their brother, Joseph from being murdered. Nevertheless, they sold him. Later Joseph reconciled with his brothers and invited the whole family to reunite in Egypt⁸⁸⁶. A new nation has now begun even outside Canaan, after painful, judgmental truth, forbearance of revenge, empathy and compassion and new solidarity between enemies. Before he died, Jacob had asked his sons to "Say to Joseph, 'Forgive, I pray you, the transgression of your brothers and their sin...'"⁸⁸⁷. The sins of the past generation can affect future generations. Therefore, those who reacted negatively to the Detmold Confession may be wrong if they think that the iniquities of the past can simply disappear; corporate sin obstructs the fullness of relationships between God and the community and prevents the latter from becoming a true community of human beings, truly united in a fraternal communion of love and sharing.

To stop the perpetuation of generational sin, there are at least two options which may be complementary. Firstly, teaching children, in families, schools, Churches, youth clubs and organisations, in media how to respect and love those who do not belong to their biological and sociological group or those whose views differ from theirs. Above all, effort must be made to eradicate all the mechanisms of structural injustices, prejudices fed by myths and lies, discrimination contained in law and social opportunities like job and education.

Secondly, for many different reasons it may be that the offenders are no longer there or are not available to repent for their guilt, as in the case of the Rwandan genocidals. Therefore, it may be suggested that the repentance-identification, has two basic foundations: spiritual and sociological. On the one hand, Christians belong to the same body of Christ through baptism and the blood of our Lord. They are many members of one body and when one member suffers all members suffer (1Cor.12.26). As a spiritual community we are co-responsible for one another⁸⁸⁸.

⁸⁸⁶ Ibid. p. 53. See also, Shriver, op.cit. p. 27.

⁸⁸⁷ See Genesis 37:4; 37:26; Gn.44:33; Gn.45:1-5.15; Gn.50:17. In fact, Jacob is keen to repeat to his sons what God said about the consequences of the intergenerational sins which have not been repented for. : "I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me" See Ex. 20.5.

⁸⁸⁸ See for example how the confession and repentance of Daniel, Nehemiah and Jeremiah on behalf of their communities helped to re-establish the relationship of Israel with God, and among Israelites of different generations and tribes. Nehemiah confessed on behalf of the "sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, (Nehemiah 1.6). Daniel also confessed and repented in the name of Israel" (Dan 9.4-20). In the same manner, Jeremiah says: "Let us lie down in our shame, and let our disgrace cover us. We have sinned against the Lord our God, both we and our fathers" (Jeremiah 3.25).

Daniel, Jeremiah and Nehemiah confessed in the name of the people because they believed the consequences of the offence would have repercussions on them and on the whole nation. Their confessions always comprise two dimensions: 'I' and 'my people'; they clearly state the sin committed and the iniquity resulting from the sin⁸⁸⁸.

On the other hand, the Rwandan people express the idea of organic solidarity as members of one body, one family, clan or the nation and the collective responsibility in the following tale:

A man was being tested for having stolen a bunch of bananas. The man said, it is not me but my legs. They then called on the legs. The legs said, we have never cut the banana bunch, you better ask the hands. They then said to the hands what do you say? The hands answered: we have never carried that banana. Then they questioned the head. The head said, I had never walked in that land. Then the man was acquitted because of the absence of proof for collective guilt ⁸⁸⁹.

This tale shows the dimension of a collective responsibility for any form of guilt that affects a social group. It joins Paul's perspective of the unity of the spiritual and organic body. If the eye does not recognise the relationship it has with the hand, the head and the foot, how can it function? It is only when all the parts function in harmony and when the Church functions like an organic body that a true community exists. And only such a community serves as the working model for the world.

Therefore, the notion of repentance originates from both the biblical and the Rwandan cultural ethos. For Christians, the abstaining from repentance resembles a denial of the identity of the Church. Up until now the Roman Catholic Church has as its pillars apostolic succession through Peter. A significant dimension of the life-story of Peter is his Repentance for denying Jesus. Peter and Judas both sinned in denying Jesus. Their betrayals were of the same magnitude. But the gaze of mercy and forgiveness met the gaze of recognition of guilt and sorrow which led Peter to repentance.

Yet, the Rwandan Roman Catholic hierarchy both minimises the situation of suffering of its members and then blames on someone else. In the case of the clerical hierarchy, they have been far from the suffering of the victims, the Bahutu before independence, and the Batutsi after that period. In many instances, the Churches function on the state model in which the monarchs rarely confess guilt. Their history shows that they have not been always clean.

But if the God of the Scriptures, is known through His movements of repentance, change of mind towards his people, a God of justice and love... why shouldn't the Church change its mind? If the Church has for vocation to be the conscience of the people, through repentance and forgiveness, it can reinstate justice and peace from guilt assimilated and rendered in aggression. Repentance, suggests Alain Blancy is a "divine act. It is the only way which opens the possibility to reconciliation and to renewal of the community...."⁸⁹⁰. This action can bring to an end the infernal circle of anguish and aggression, mistrust and hatred, source of conflicts.

⁸⁸⁹ Muzungu, B., Interview, Kigali, March 1997.

⁸⁹⁰ Blancy, A., "Les Eglises peuvent-elle se repentir?". In Condamnés et Réconciliés, no 77, Lyon, Février, 1977,p.44.

However, as in the example of Jesus who carried out the sentence of our death on the cross, confessing and repenting in the name of members for whom Christians and the Churches assume a certain moral responsibility, does not prevent the criminals from taking responsibility for their crimes. Instead, such a repentance fulfils three major functions: it liberates grace in alleviating the anger and pain of the offended person; it helps eradicate and stop the automatic transmission of the sin from generation to generation; it lastly allows the offending and the offended to re-establish communication.

Due to the influence of the Catholic Church on Rwandan society, it may be relevant to introduce an aspect of discussion on reconciliation from a Catholic theologian. According to Mgr Bussini, within the Roman Catholic Church, the dogmatic constitution, *Lumen Gentium* of Vatican II considers reconciliation as a "theological order reality". The sacrament of reconciliation means two things. Firstly, that the Church celebrates, receives forgiveness and acknowledges the love that heals. The reconciled enters into a personal relationship with God, in prayer, fasting, charity... Secondly, as light of the nations, the unification of humanity and socialisation of the divided and broken world is fulfilled in Christ. The Church regards the Christ, both as a "sign and a means of the intimate union with God and of the unity of human kind". In this gathering of Jews and gentiles, we are engaged in Spirit to share the childhood relations that unite Christ with the Father and we are associated to propagate the message of reconciliation. This union with Christ passes through the celebration of the sacraments.⁸⁹¹ Consequently, the Church becomes a sign of an intimate union with God and human kind. Transformed and changed, it can then radiate the visage of the risen and can call for conversion in faith. It becomes, for the divided and broken world, the message for forgiveness and reconciliation and can collaborate to create a 'civilisation of Love'⁸⁹².

VII. 3.2. Colonial Powers to Apologise

In December 1997 the Belgian Parliament (Two Chambers) published a more than 1000 page report of an ad-hoc Commission inquiry into the 1994 tragic events in Rwanda. The commission was created under the pressure of Belgian public opinion and some politicians including Senator Destexhe to unveil the truth about the death of 10 Belgians⁸⁹³ of the UN troops who were

⁸⁹¹ Mgr Bussini refers to what the Roman Catholic Church calls the 'fourth sacrament': the Penance. Bussini also acknowledges what the Church calls the sacraments of 'initiation': Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist. Bussini (Mgr), F., "L'église catholique, Sacrement de la Réconciliation pour le monde". In *Unité Chrétienne- Condamnés et réconciliés*. No 77, Feb. 1985, p.27-29.

⁸⁹² Ibid, p.30

⁸⁹³ Out of the 2500 UN blue helmets present in Rwanda in a so-called mission to supervise the implementation of the Arusha Peace Agreement, Belgium had 470 men. See chapter five.

lynched by the Rwandan Presidential Guard while attempting to escort the late Prime Minister, Agathe Uwiringiyimana⁸⁹⁴.

Using the most accurate scholarship available, auditing several hundreds of oral and written witnesses, the Commission analysed the socio-historical and political evolution of the pre-colonial, colonial and post-independence Rwanda. They collected a lot of information on the errors of colonialism and of its relations with the two republican regimes. The report outlines, in particular, the hostility developed by the anti-peace groups of the Presidential camp, especially through the RTLM, against the Belgian troops who were accused of being the right hand of the RPF and the Batutsi. The Commissioners confirmed that like France, Belgium knew the exact details about the preparation of the genocide. In particular, they knew about the abundant reports sent to Brussels by Johan Swinnen, then Ambassador of Belgium in Kigali, as well as, from January 1994, reports sent by Major-General Romeo Dallaire, the UN Peace Troops Commander.

Hence a French native, R. Braumann, for a long time Chairman of the very well known medical organisation, Médecins sans Frontières, who like Destexhe, pioneered in France to have the truth about the role of his country unveiled, commented that "France has adopted a cynical position, supporting fully the genocidal regime, accepting that the Tutsi of the region be eliminated in the name of the majority rule democracy"⁸⁹⁵.

Though the report evokes implicitly how Belgium contributed to the process which led to the 1994 genocide, it understandably focuses on the death of the Belgian blue helmets whose families continue to accuse their government of incompetence in the handling of the crisis. Hence it reduces the 1994 Rwandan tragedy to the death of its 10 nationals and pays little attention to the million of victims who also suffered and died. Secondly, it omitted to invite Belgium to apologise to Rwanda for its lack of historical responsibility in the processes that led Rwanda to the tragedy.

Having sown the seed of hatred among Rwandans themselves on the one hand, and on the other, between Belgian people and Rwandans; having sown injustices, ethnic and regional resentment and then abandoned the victims of the 1950's and 1994 even exposing them to death,⁸⁹⁶ with the publication of that Parliament Report, Belgium has a unique historical chance to apologise. It must acknowledge some of the injustices so as to stop the transmission of generational sins

⁸⁹⁴ The Belgians were sent to escort the late Prime Minister who was attempting to reach Radio Rwanda early the 7 April 1994 to broadcast a message calling the population to remain calm.

⁸⁹⁵ RFI programmes of 20 and 21 January 1998, 7.45.

⁸⁹⁶ The Minister of Foreign Affairs and his family were taken from their residence by the Belgian troops to a so-called 'safer place' which appeared to be the School of Technology of Kicukiro. There, they were abandoned by both the Belgian and French troops on 11 April 1994. More than 4000 refugees were exterminated. Ngurinzira, F.(Mrs), Interview in Brussels, July 1995.

between Belgians and Rwandans. At the same time the report challenges France to follow the example of Belgium and allow the truth to be unveiled about its supposed role⁸⁹⁷.

It must also be remembered that from 1945, Rwanda was a UN trusteeship confided to Belgium; the UN cannot then simply ignore the consequences of the decolonisation in one of its trusteeship nor avoid to fulfil its mandate of preventing and repressing the crime of genocide.⁸⁹⁸ Hence, both the International community and the Great Powers which govern the World and the UN stand accused by the Rwandan genocide⁸⁹⁹.

VII. 3.3. Justice, as a Factor of Reconciliation

After the genocide, some countries and international partners urged Rwanda to engage in reconciliation as a precondition for international aid. Since then, many people have had different opinions on how to rebuild Rwanda⁹⁰⁰. Some suggest that the quest for justice and for the eradication of impunity is the priority. Others still refer to the Arusha Peace Agreement as preconditions for a sustainable reconciliation. Both the United Nations and the Rwandan government have put an emphasis on the pursuit of the criminals who planned and executed the genocide in creating tribunals to deal with the issue.

Nevertheless, many observers express the views that without a physical and economical reconstruction which could offer prospects for equal opportunities and without distributive justice, reconciliation may still be remote. Likewise, some scholars had expressed the views that the economic severity of the Versailles Treaty and the fact that the Allied politicians vowed that "no German would have any visible reason to doubt that their country had been defeated", had

⁸⁹⁷ In early March 1998, the Commission of Defence of the French Parliament created an ad-hoc commission to inquiry on France's responsibility in the crisis, from 1990 to 1994. Liberation of 4 March 1998.

⁸⁹⁸ The Convention on "Prevention and Repression of the Crime of Genocide" was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948. See Destexhe, A., *Rwanda. Essai sur le Génocide*, Bruxelles: Editions Complexe, 1994, p.17.

⁸⁹⁹ In fact, it was only on 25 May 1994 two months after the genocide began and at a time it was almost consumed that the UN General Secretary, Boutros Boutros Ghali referred to it as a genocide. Yet on 31 June 1994 he surprised the world when he invited the heads of states present at the OAU summit to 'forget the past' on his ground that "there had been genocide on one side and another". Meanwhile on 16 May 1994 the Security Council voted the resolution 918 to redeploy 5500 blue helmets to replace the 2500 who had been withdrawn on 27 April 1994 after assisting indifferently on the genocide massacre. It is believed that the UN was handicapped by both the position of France, sponsor of the genocide regime, and the Clinton Administration which was keen to avoid the use of 'genocide' which should have compelled them to intervene. See *Le Vif l'Express*, 10 June 1994; 17 July 1994. During his brief stop at Kigali Airport on 26 March 1998 President Clinton acknowledged that "The international community, together with nations in Africa must bear its share of responsibility for this tragedy, as well. We did not act quickly enough after the killing began. We should not have allowed the refugee camps to become safe havens for the killers. We did not immediately call these crimes by their rightful name: genocide. We cannot change the past. But we can and must do everything in our power to help you build a future without fear, and full of hope". "Remarks by the President to Genocide Survivors, Assistance Workers and US and Rwanda Government Officials". Kigali, 1998. Clinton failed to apologise for this omission as well as for the blockage put by his administration to prevent any UN Security Council action.

⁹⁰⁰ E.M., *Interview*, Kigali, April 1995. According to our research the majority of survivors of the 1994 genocide share the government position. People of good will, Bahutu and Batutsi have always lived and continue to live together. Reconciliation says E.M is irrelevant since the perpetrators of violence "show no sign of regret for the genocide".

contributed to the rise of Nazism⁹⁰¹. Bad treaties can be seeds of wars and violence. As indicated in chapters five and six, such an accusation was made against the 1993 Arusha Peace Agreement. The Agreement was continuously presented by its opponents as the revenge of the "defeated monarchists over the Bahutu". The most hated clauses of the Agreement were, the sharing of power between the two major communities, the demobilisation of the majority of the armed forces which were not needed in the period of peace and the trial of the bureaucrats of the administration and armies who would have been involved in human rights abuse. This thesis has expressed a conviction that regardless of some imperfections inherent in every human creativity, the Agreement presented the potential for being the minimum requirement for preventing the continuing escalation of the conflict.

In the case of the Holocaust, the Nuremberg Tribunal adopted the principle of death and life sentence for top Nazi criminals taken as individual agents. However, as many Germans had simply literally followed the orders of their dictator, the Führer Prinzip, the judges had to turn down many other candidates for 'justice' who were too numerous for courtrooms or jails, or even because some were indispensable to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of a devastated society⁹⁰². With Hitler dead, there was a problem of knowing who should be held 'morally and legally' responsible for the 'guilt' of Nazism.

In the case of Rwanda, the slowness of the International Community, and the UN tribunal led the⁹⁰³ Rwandan government to initiate its own legal procedure to judge the thousands of people who are assumed to have participated in the genocide and massacres. The Rwandan authorities believe that there can be no reconciliation without the judgement of those who were involved in the genocide. The President of Rwanda, Pasteur Bizimungu has expressed it as follows:

Mais il ne pourra y avoir de Réconciliation et à fortiori de reconstruction sans Justice. Ce serait reconduire l'impunité et banaliser la mort. La mort dans laquelle certains ont cru trouver une solution finale à leur soif de pouvoir. Mais avec eux, des milliers de Rwandais ont de gré ou de force trempé leurs mains dans le sang de leurs compatriotes. Redonner un prix à la vie c'est mesurer les responsabilités individuelles et les sanctionner. C'est aussi le prix à payer pour que les Rwandais puissent à nouveau vivre ensemble. Pour qu'ils puissent pleurer leurs victimes sans désir de vengeance. Pour que les coupables règlent leurs dettes à la société et que leurs fils n'aient plus de compte à subir⁹⁰⁴.

Like Bizimungu, many Rwandans believe that due to the extent of the atrocities which have been committed, calling for reconciliation without punishment would be an illusion. The Rwandan

⁹⁰¹ Shriver Jr,D., op.cit. p. 12.

⁹⁰² Ibid. p.81.

⁹⁰³ Created by the UN Security Council in resolution 955 in November 1994 established an international tribunal to judge those responsible for the genocide and other crimes committed between 1 January and the 31 December 1994. The Tribunal (IPT) was installed in Arusha, Tanzania.

Parliament then voted a law on the genocide in 1996. According to MP Kageruka, a Roman Catholic leader of a charismatic prayer group, this law aims to break the impunity and facilitate reconciliation. But it requires positive actions so as to eradicate the evil in society⁹⁰⁵.

The law groups the suspects into different categories: the authors, executioners and accomplices of the genocide and massacres⁹⁰⁶. However, observers have noticed that the appliance of the organic law on genocide may pose a dilemma to Rwandan justice. Many people have been driven to participate in the militia and the armed groups which executed the genocide. However, many performed individual atrocities.

How then to distinguish the limits between politics and moral threat? If on one hand, the genocide rightly cries for justice, on the other, a much reduced legal system with large number of prisoners, risks sacrificing innocents who languish in jails, while many true criminals escape justice as they must be assumed innocent before trial. That serves the ends of the genocidals⁹⁰⁷. Equally, though it has been assumed that the genocide was planned by the regime of Habyarimana, it is not clear, in the absence of an inquiry, who will be held legally and morally responsible for the genocide. In fact, it is not clear if President Habyarimana whose death inaugurated the genocide, died as victim or sacrifice.

In a society where impunity has been erected as the means of government, memories cannot heal until Justice is done. According to Prof. Bernstein who participated in the activities of the Nuremberg Tribunal on the Nazis criminals, the condemnation of the latter has been a healing act for the Jewish people. Wherever such a condemnation didn't take place as in the genocide of the

⁹⁰⁴ Declaration of the Rwanda Government. International Conference "Rwanda in its Regional Context: Human rights, Reconciliation and Rehabilitation". La Haye, 16-17 September 1994. Rwanda was represented by President Pasteur Bizimungu and many other members of his Cabinet.

⁹⁰⁵ Kageruka, I., *Interview*, Detmold, 11/12/1996.

⁹⁰⁶ Republic of Rwanda: Journal Official, Law no 8/96 of October 30/1996 n0 17 of 1/9/1996.

on the pursuit of the crimes of genocide or the crimes against Humanity from October 1, 1990.

The law classifies the suspects in four categories:

first category: a) the organisers, initiators, supervisors of the genocide and crime against humanity; b) those who acted in the position of authority nationally or locally, being members of political parties, army, religious confessions or militia; c) the executioners who committed atrocities; d) those who committed sexual tortures.

The second category include the co-authors or accomplices of homicide or grave acts that led to death. The third category include people who committed grave criminal acts. The fourth category, the persons who committed offence against properties.

The persons of the first category incur the death penalty; those in the second category the life sentence. Following a mutual agreement for restitution and reparation, the suspects in the last category can receive remittance of sanction. The law has also installed the procedure for confessing. When it happens the penalties are reduced.

⁹⁰⁷ In October 1997, with more than 120,000 arrests in prisons with few magistrates available, some observers have questioned the capacity of the Rwanda judiciary system to handle adequately such a large number of cases. For C. Ntampaka, a Rwandan professor of law, the so-called first list of 1946 names of suspects published by the Prosecutor of the High Court poses problems of reliability. It presents insufficient and confusing information on the identities and the charges against the suspects. Instead of being an instrument of truth and reconciliation, the law can maintain suspicion and mistrust among people. Ntampaka, C., "La Justice Rwandaise à l'Epreuve du Droit". *In Dialogue*, no 195, Bruxelles, Janvier. 1997, pp. 17-26

1,5 millions of Armenians by the Turks in 1915, the genocide of 1 million Serbs by the Croats during the second war, the massacres of Bahutu in Burundi in 1972, the wounds could not heal⁹⁰⁸. A wound has to be exposed, opened, cleansed, balmed and given time to heal.

In ancient Greece, Solon, a legal expert and pioneer of democracy, was opposed to impunity. He said that "transgression of justice is a disturbance of social organism... A state thus punished is affected by party feuds and civil wars... If the guilty man escapes punishment, his innocent children and his descendants suffer in his stead"⁹⁰⁹. Solon' efforts aimed to prevent inter-generational thirst for revenge. For a just revenge leads to a just counter-revenge and this leads to civil war. For democracy to triumph, society must develop a language of dialogue as the central medium in political exchange rather than raw power .

Likewise, Father Muzungu, one of the theologians of Inculturation in Africa, perceives the aim of legal justice as an indispensable complement to psychological pressure indispensable to bringing the criminals to acknowledge their guilt. "Human Justice, conscience and moral laws", he says, "compel the guilty to accept their crime for eventual reparation with a view to preventing the circle of revenge. Unfortunately", he adds, "in Rwanda the elite have a false perception that accepting their sin diminishes them; there is a pretext of pride".

In such a case of denial, punishment reduces the psychological resistance to the acceptance of sin; it increases the chances for the guilty to acknowledge that they need to be healed. In punishment there are two aspects. Firstly, the revenge which is anti-evangelical as life belongs to God alone. Secondly, the individual is prevented from becoming a professional criminal. However, forgiveness does not depend on the will of the guilty alone. God who died for us was not mistaken. Reception of forgiveness is blocked by an unwillingness to repent. The option of forgiveness remains open though the process becomes much harder⁹¹⁰.

For Forrester, "justice is not vindictive, unrelenting or mechanical, nor a machine-like, balanced retribution, the *lex talionis* of the blindfold, impersonal figure of *Justitia*, with scales and sword in hand. Nor is it a cheap grace which veils the gravity of the offence and sin. At the heart of

⁹⁰⁸ Vleugels, J., "Le pardon est -il possible après le Génocide? Une Approche Pastorale". In *Dialogue* no 182, Ap. 1995, pp. 36-54.

After the defeat many regimes: Idi Amin, Habyarimana, Mobutu, Mengistu, Siad Barre, Lisouba and even the Angolese rebel Savimbi, many armies have dissolved and many arms are out of control of a central government. The Rwandan crisis as part of a sub-regional context can only resolve for a sustainable peace if really contextualised. On the other hand, some among the new administrations seem not be ready to sort out the dense mixture of good and evil that has suffused the enmity of the conflicts. People have continued to undertake more actions which set new geometrical record in politics of destruction: the massacres of refugees, the attacks of the genocidal militia to finish off their agenda; the attack against the freedom of speech; the attack against the private properties. In many cases, that constitutes a threat to the normality.

⁹⁰⁹ Shriver Jr, D., op.cit. p. 13.

⁹¹⁰ Muzungu, B., Interview, Kigali, March 1997.

justice we find mercy, forgiveness and love more than fairness and equity".... However, it is clear for Forrester that "mercy and forgiveness do not ignore or cover up the offence, and are not incompatible with penalty and with repentance" though it would be to simplistic to suggest that these two have no bearing upon criminal offence⁹¹¹.

Martin Luther King, Jr linked the necessity for forgiveness to the fact that most human beings live and act in blindness. Reflecting on the Lord's prayer phrase on the cross: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do", and by extrapolation the process that roots racial attitudes and heartlessness in the masses, King showed that the Lord's prayer implies also human intellectual and spiritual blindness. For him innocent but ignorant people can be subtly subjected to a dangerous manipulation of different ideologies by the elite like those who arrested, put on trial and condemned Jesus. Likewise, in Rwanda the masses have been manipulated and pushed to commit acts of great inhumanity⁹¹². But the most exciting side of M. L. King's story is his firm conviction that equal rights for all are the best foundation of a lasting peace.

VII. 3.4. Investing in Peace and Educating Questioning Generations.

Having assessed the aspects of guilt, repentance, forgiveness and justice, questions remain as how these factors can be transformed into a process which creates a lasting peace. Both Rwanda government and civil society are persuaded that punishment is not the only option. They both recognise the need for education for peace and reconciliation. In a recent intervention, the Rwandan Director General of Culture and Arts, Jean Mukimbiri, set up five guidelines for Reconciliation and peaceful co-existence: 1. Education on Reconciliation and peaceful co-existence; 2. Struggle against discrimination and promotion of rights; 3. Consolidation of the democratic process in the lights of culture and history of each country/ region; 4. Inter-cultural dialogue between national groups and, 5. Resolving conflicts through dialogue⁹¹³.

This agrees with the NGOs and the views of human rights activists. For C. Ntampaka, to be a real instrument of peace the Churches have to invest in Education for peace with the clergy becoming good models of what they teach instead of being the tools for division. They ought to promote human rights from the very beginning; teach young people that rights are vindicated not given. Finally the Churches must maintain humanitarian actions in favour of the poor and at the same time set up initiatives which build up the fabric of society like rehabilitating heroes⁹¹⁴. This

⁹¹¹ Forrester, D., *Christian Justice and Public Policy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 237/8.

⁹¹² King Jr, M.L., *La Force d'Aimer*. Translation by . From *The force of Love*, Casterman, 1964.

⁹¹³ Mukimbiri, J., *Orientations présentées à la Conférence sur la Réconciliation et la co-existence Pacifique*, Kigali, 28 Mars 1997.

⁹¹⁴ Ntampaka, C., *Interview in Brussels*, July 1996.

insistence on the necessity to invest in education for peace reminds the Churches that irrespective of the existence of the foundations of human rights in both the Bible and in the Christian tradition⁹¹⁵ and in the history of the United Nations⁹¹⁶, they have failed to integrate the dimension of human rights in their teachings.

However, the most valuable investment, in the view of this thesis, is primarily educating a questioning generation capable of standing for their rights and those of the community. The ongoing experiences of the grass-roots dealing with the rehabilitation of Christian activities as assessed above, help individuals and communities to enter into a spiritual dialogue with themselves and one another and to eventually acknowledge the profundity of the evil.

Ntezimana is right to highlight the fact that 'control of power' was one of the four degrading forces spread by the Akazu -group and the Interahamwe and which precipitated the country into moral decadence⁹¹⁷. The other degrading forces were 'possession' or the control of resources at any price, 'valoir' or the violent expression of self-esteem combined with vanity, and the control of 'knowledge'. These functioned through the perpetration of violence, intimidation and suppression of individual liberties.

Yet, a question needs to be asked so as to identify why the Church establishment has been incapable of addressing the issue of power and violence. What is clear is that the Roman Catholic Church has an ecclesial mandate from its magisterium to assume its social and ethical responsibility. According to professor Subilia, Vatican II ecclesiology introduced the concept of the Church as, 'people of God'⁹¹⁸. It reaffirmed that the church has a 'civilising task', designed to prepare society to receive the Gospel. Corollary, it developed the idea of 'bureaucratisation' of

⁹¹⁵The document 'Gaudum et spes' no 29 of Vatican II strongly integrated the human rights dimension into the teaching of the Church.

⁹¹⁶The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) has then become the first generation of rights. The second generation of Rights is considered to be the social and economic rights. The third generation comprises the ecology and development.

According to John De Gruchy, Christianity has given the matrix to democracy. The Bible too defines different theologies appropriate to crises: The rebellion-passion of Job; the prophetic judgement and suffering of Jeremiah; the theology of renewed of Ezekiel, the theology of anticipation of the coming of Deuteo-Isaiih, the theologies of reconstruction of Nehemiah and Ezra and the theology of dream of Zachariah and Joel. These are the basis for both Catholics and Protestants to oppose unjust policies. But the attitude of the Churches has varied from context to context. After the holocaust, the German Protestant Churches made the 1945 Stuttgart declaration of guilt whilst in Cuba, the Church could never recover from its collaboration with the Baptista regime until its 1986 declaration. See De Gruchy, J., *Christianity and Democracy*, London/N.Y. Cambridge University Press, 1995.

⁹¹⁷Ntezimana, L. "De Charybde en Scylla". In *Dialogue no 178*. Bruxelles, Octobre.1994, & Ntezimana, L. "La désinsertion" in *Dialogue no 182*. Bruxelles, April 1995. See also our analysis in chapter IV on the process of mystification of power and the ruler.

⁹¹⁸Vatican II Constitution, *Lumen Gentium* integrates chapter II on the people of God, chapter III on the "hierarchical constitution of the Church" and chapter IV on the laity.

society in which the laity holds a position in the public structures while continuing to execute the orders of the ecclesial hierarchy⁹¹⁹.

Why, since then few initiatives have been taken to conceive the Church from below? The monarchical organisation keeps the reins of command and prevent the dynamic Rwandan Christians creativity. Father Muzungu put it in this way: "The Church is not a democracy. The Pope can bring an incompetent person from anywhere and appoint them in any position". Muzungu's interview surely raises the question of how power is exercised within the Churches themselves.

"The world-wide Catholic Church", comments P.Deschamps, "is a dynamic macro-system comprising a mazzo-system of Churches, themselves enclosed in a micro-system of Episcopal dioceses. It is a rigid hierarchical system where each superior institution is politically responsible for the inferior institutions. Rwandan ecclesial hierarchies, Catholic and Protestant hierarchies", Deschamps goes on, "should cease to maintain a stubborn silence justifying the past and legitimating the present, but rather agree to repent for the offences committed by its members during the genocide. Instead of hiding behind an old-fashioned religious discourse, it is time to assess on each level the individual and collective guilt, to interact with the people of God, and with them to examine what has happened"⁹²⁰.

Among the Protestants, apart from the EPR confession, in May 1996, the general Assembly of the CPR acknowledged that its members failed to become a model of unity in society; that they failed to bring through evangelism, truth, unity and love. To this half self-questioning, it must be added that, as in the Roman Catholic Church, the decision-making machinery in Rwandan Protestantism has become a centralising system in the hands of the 'legal representatives', the bishops and the ministers with little regard for or accountability to the congregations.

The notion of power in the Church, as said earlier, does not correspond to the biblical ethos. It has developed with considerable influence from the political and cultural environment ignoring the charisma of the community. It is the conviction of this thesis that rehabilitating the biblical ethos in the life of Christians passes through rediscovering the role of the community as a creative source of power. That requires the assertion of the confessional and sacramental character of the community in forgiveness and reconciliation. Such a teaching was a core

⁹¹⁹ Subilia,V. "The Ecclesiology of Vatican II". In The Reformed and Presbyterian World. Geneva: WRA, Vo XXVIII, no 5, March 1965, pp. 200-210.

⁹²⁰ Deschamps, P., " Eglise, Qu' as-tu Fait Pendant le Génocide"? In Dialogue no 198, Février-Mars 1996, pp. 85-88, particularly, p.86.

principle of the primitive Church; it was reaffirmed by the reformers and the Vatican II Council⁹²¹.

VII. 3.5. Mediating Among the Three Communities

This work has been concerned with showing that the Rwandan crises developed into accumulation of factors meaning that before the consequences and effects of a previous tragedy are dealt with, another tragedy arrives. As stated previously, reconciliation comes at the end of a process starting with the identification of the root causes and a confession, repentance, forgiveness and healing of memories.

In that context, Ntezimana assumes that the root causes of the conflict were established between the Bahutu and the Batutsi by the three factors: fear, arrogance, and the politics of the 'belly'. In his book 'Imburagihana'⁹²² (the one who lacked an adviser/ prosecutor), A.Nduwayezu discusses the conflict between the Bahutu and the Batutsi through what he called the trial of Sebahutu (the sons of Bahutu) and Sebatutsi (the son of Batutsi). The trial, had three witnesses Mutwa, Muzungu (the White) and Mateka (History). In the trial primarily concerned with the affair between the two brothers, but which turns its attention also to the White, Nduwayezu identifies the offences, injustices, prejudices, imputable to each of the three defendants⁹²³.

The pronouncement of the judgement inculcates the two (three) defendants and invites the rivals to reconcile. A detailed ecumenical ceremony is then organised in the framework of the tradition of each Religion (the traditional religion, Christianity: Catholics; Protestants, Pentecostals, Adventists, and Islam), present in the land. Then Rwanda will be ruled with democratic principles; everyone's right will be respected and all the heroes of Sebahutu and Sebatutsi rehabilitated⁹²⁴. For Nduwayezu, the Banyarwanda became Imburagihana because those who would have done it, the Church and the colonial ruler were part of the problem.

⁹²¹ Kung, H., *The Church*, London: Burns & Oates, 1968, pp 128; 336. See also Ela, J-M., op.cit. p.55ff. On priesthood role of Christian community see also, 1 Pet.2.9-10; Gal.6.16; Gal 3.29; Eph4.1-5.

⁹²² Nduwayezu, A., *Imburagihana*, Kigali: Editions Barama, 1991.

⁹²³ Ibid. p. 138. In particular to have killed among those who remained with him in the country in the reprisal against the outside' inyenzi attacks; he must respond to the charges about the 1973 violence that left several hundred dead and sent others in exile at a time the external attacks had ceased and why he had opposed the return of the Sebatutsi refugees, excluded them from schools, politics and senior positions in public administration after 1959

⁹²⁴ The author mentions, in particular, the heads of the state of Rwanda, Rwabugiri, Rutarindwa, Musinga, Mutara, Mbonyumutwa and Kayibanda. He noted that he left out Habyarimana whose regime was not yet about to end and which would be judged by history and the Banyarwanda. Nduwayezu, A., Op. cit. p.192/3.

In fact, Rwabugiri died during a military expedition in Kivu region. It was assumed that he died under the plot of his political rivals. His son and successor, Rutarindwa was assassinated in the Rucunshu putsch, in 1896. His half-brother and successor, Musinga died in Moba/Zaire in 1943 where he had been exiled by the Belgians in 1931. His son and successor, Mutara III Rudahigwa died, assassinated in Bujumbura in 1959. The 1959 revolution brought in power, a Hutu president, Kayibanda. The later died in 1975 assassinated by the regime of his successor, Habyarimana. Habyarimana himself was killed in a plane crash shot down in early April 1994.

Beyond the generous but restricted interpretation of Ntezimana, lies, as shown earlier, the external interferences. These worsened the situation and the need for the truth becomes even more evident. For Father N.pc., the noble notion of Reconciliation must be handled with some preambles, honesty in reflection; removing injustices past and present; respecting human rights. Father N.pc. put it as follows:

Je suis Tutsi, je ne l'ai pas voulu. Né réfugié, je ne l'ai pas voulu. Mon père n'a pas été chassé par les Hutu, mais par le Roi. J'ai été au Katanga. Ma mère, veuve à 25 ans, avec 3 enfants. En 1961 nous avons pu retourner au Rwanda. J'ai connu l'exclusion. Originaire du Centre du Rwanda, j'ai dû aller au séminaire à l'Est. En 1963, j'ai vu la mort en face. En 1973, j'ai encore vu la mort en face. En 1994, je ne peux pas expliquer comment j'ai survécu, à Ruhango, puis à Kabgayi. En 1994/5, j'ai vu les gens mourir, tués par les Tutsi. Les Hutu m'ont dit les horreurs qu'ils ont vécues. Il y a des Hutu qui meurent parce qu'ils sont Hutu. Je voudrais qu'il y ait l'honnêteté dans le reportage des faits⁹²⁵.

Clearly, to resolve the Rwandan conflict one has to review the different national and external responsibilities. This will bring the various parties in the conflict to a position of humility and modesty. This passage shows clearly that, there is no landmark in guilt; there are not necessarily innocents in one camp and guilty in the other.

With regard to Nduwayezu it is best to first place his invitation to reconciliation and position in context. Writing in the course of 1991 with an obvious tendency to defend the regime of which, as head of the Office of Intelligence, under direct control of Habyarimana, Nduwayezu⁹²⁶, deliberately omitted the analysis of the mechanisms, the structures of the MRND party, its bureaucrats and the machinery which spread violence. However, here was an attempt from within the system, to identify and name some of the root causes of the conflict and propose a way forward towards the re-establishment of harmony.

The 1994 genocide arrived because of the violent groups who were opposed to the Arusha Peace Agreement which would have provided the basis for power sharing. In fact, the discussions above showed that society has been estranged from its institutions, the army, the security forces, the administration. These have become the machinery of destruction of human beings. More devastating, many people were led to kill their fellows neighbours. As Dr E. Rwabuhiri observed in reaction to the Detmold Confession, we do not become Christians so as to continue reasoning into sectarianism.

However, in a real world in which we live, many people have come to behave in Bahutu-Batutsi binary opposition. It no longer helps to hide the divisions; it rather helps to show the divine presence in each human being and the Spirit of God who breaks down the walls of separation. As mediator, the Churches must help to find out a new formula which guarantees the inclusion of

⁹²⁵ Father Npc. Interview, December 1996.

⁹²⁶ Former head of Intelligence in the Habyarimana regime.

social, cultural, political, religious group's opinion. The process should re-establish mutual confidence; it should guarantee that the losers in political and military power terms would not be excluded, dominated and overwhelmed by the winners; it should offer the chance of respect of integrity of life and human rights. Taking into account the feelings of the losers is to make yesterday's enemy a friend, a partner in the making of a destiny of the nation.

Dumas identifies three models of the re-encounter to heal the family fracture. Firstly, after the social decay due to the tragedy that followed the murder of Abel by Cain, he suggests that it has been valued a re-encounter of social and political style aiming at the reconstitution of brotherhood and equality. Secondly, in the case of Jacob and Esau, it was a prudent diplomatic approach proposed by Jacob to Esau in which the two communities would remain prudently distant from one another (Gn. 33). These two models remain a fragile enterprise. And thirdly, a 'total reintegration model' where the guilty, like in the case of the brothers of Joseph, become the witnesses of a new revolution made not for eliminating nor excluding the Other but for re-establishing in force and duties and enjoying brotherhood and national co-operation with those whom they were alienated by their fault.⁹²⁷

This writer follows Dumas' last model, that of total integration because unlike the other models, it inspires a rebuilding of the broken brotherhood between the Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa. When the faults of a previous generation have been imposed upon children or political communities, then every generation both inherits and repeats them. The stones of the past, writes Shriver, weigh down the present; the burden of history is one of the chains of office, and every set of leaders adds something to that weight.

In contemporary history of relations between the Banyarwanda, despite all the external influences underlined in this work as well as the universality of guilt, as the most horrific tragedy, the genocide was committed against the Batutsi. It seems reasonably correct to suggest that the Bahutu community pursues a straightforward effort to confess and repent so as to re-establish communication with their counterparts Batutsi. However, this author is aware of, on the one hand a possible political manipulation, and on the other, the naiveté of such a process if it was not backed by the political authorities. In this regard, the message of Richard.F.von Weizsäcker, former President of Germany to his fellow Germans with regard to the legacy of the Nazis applies well in Rwandan case for both the population and the rulers:

every German", he said, "would witness what Jewish fellow citizens had to suffer, from cold indifference through veiled intolerance to open hatred... Who could remain innocent after the burning of the Synagogue, the looting, the stigmatising with the Jewish star, the withdrawal of rights, the unceasing violations of human

⁹²⁷ Dumas, A., op.cit. p. 69.

worth?...The imagination of men is insufficient to encompass the means and the scale of the annihilation. But in reality the crime itself was compounded by the attempts of all too many people- in my generation as well, we who were young and who had no part in the planning and execution of the events- not to take note of what was happening". "No feeling person expects (young Germans now) to wear a hair shirt merely because they are Germans. Yet their forefathers have bequeathed them a heavy legacy", and "all of us, whether guilty or not, whether old or young, must accept the past"⁹²⁸.

Von Weizsäcker's message like Mandela's and Tutu's, shows that Political and moral figures can help nations to remember, repent and forgive. A re-encounter between the three Rwandan communities is unlikely to happen if the moral forces are unable to create a doorway to it. When A. Sadat, President of Egypt visited Israel in 1977 and was taken to Yad Vaseem, the Museum dedicated to the memory of the 6 million Jewish victims of Holocaust, he said that he had always thought it was merely an exaggerated propaganda. "I saw with my eyes", he said, "how Israelis, and Jews the world over, must feel. They are victims not of war alone but also of politics and hatred"⁹²⁹. When a public figure starts telling how their mind has been changed by the suffering of the victims, that begin to teach their constituencies to change.

VII. 3.6. Rehabilitating Relational harmony

The inhumanity which characterised the recent tragedies affected the fundamental virtues which, according to various sources, cemented social and cultural harmony. In working for reconstruction, it seems to this writer that the essential of the spectrum of Rwandan fundamental virtues must be revisited to detect their weakness which facilitated their ideological manipulation. Bimenyimana enumerates some of these virtues such as: a. reverence and obedience to parents and to authorities (*kubaha no kumvira ababyeyi n'abategets*) who are viewed as depositories of wisdom; b. to be wise (*gushyira mu gaciro*) for discernment; c. to work hard (*gukunda gukora*); d. solidarity (*gufatikanya*); e. cordiality- hospitality (*urugwiro-ubupfura*) so to live in harmony⁹³⁰.

These virtues should be viewed critically so as to filter out whatever negative significance they may reflect in the Rwandan culture. For example, *kubaha abategets* (to obey the authorities) enhanced the culture of *irivuze umwami ukoma yombi* (whatever the monarch says you applaud) and became the doorway through which the extremists entered to manipulate the population. The cultivation of a genuine theological thinking, as discussed above, should lead the Rwandan people to question the orders from any source of power whether authorities or neighbours before executing them blindly.

Another aspect of Rwandan culture is concerned with resolving conflict. Both African and Rwandan cultures offer different formulas which must be explored. One of the African ways of

⁹²⁸ Shriver, op.cit. p. 110.

⁹²⁹ Ibid. p.71.

⁹³⁰ Bimenyimana, J., *La Rwandisation de l'Enseignement Secondaire*. Thèse, Rome: Université Pontificale, 1992, p.103.

resolving conflicts is the palaver (a form of conciliation by the community) ⁹³¹. This model which had its setting in Rwandan society - the 'Gacaca' - has emerged in recent African politics in the form of the 'National Conference'. Eboussi Boulanga suggests that the National Conference organised for the first time in Benin, is not only a forum for dialogue but a therapy for the African populations wounded by the violence of the state regimes which perpetrated repression, tortures, and denial of rights ⁹³².

In addition to the 'Gacaca', or the mediation of lineages or communities, there existed a magico-religious process called *Inzira ya gicurasi n'igihitasi* (the path of May and pass-underground) ⁹³³; both processes compelled families, lineages and society to resolve the conflicts at a very early stage. They would compel both the elites and the masses to sit together and listen to one another with the assistance of a mediator.

If such a process, which from the perspective of the present work, links with a *Listening Ecclesiology* was adopted by moral forces, including the Churches, and promoted as a form of dialogue and communication in society, then the cultural based 'Gacaca' could help society to liberate itself from the slavery of a rigid monologue of the state bureaucracy.

If the Churches decide to assume a role in ending violence and revenge using among other means, Gacaca, then they must have a vision of reinforcing the vital force. This vision from the perspective of this thesis, must be Koinonia, the way people can live together, having things in common, sharing, listening to one another and participating in a common reality. According to K. Mutiah, Koinonia is wholeness; it includes prayer, worship, fellowship, healing, repentance and thanksgiving ⁹³⁴. Where Koinonia is practised there are expressed the fundamental images of the Body of Christ, the people of God, the temple.

⁹³¹ The National Conference is a forum which emerged from the grass-roots in Africa at the end of 1980s. The organisers intended a bringing together of the different social, political, religious forces to reflect on how to initiate a new model of managing our societies. It has been organised for the first time in Benin, in 1990, then in Togo, Gabon, Niger, Congo; R.D. Congo. It facilitated the transfer of power from the military rules to the democratically elected bodies. Even though in many cases, the dictators have managed to cling on power, or to retake power by arms, from a historical and psychological perspectives, the impact on the population of such an undertaking cannot be underestimated.

⁹³² Boulanga, E., *Les Conférences Nationales en Afrique Noire. Une Affaire à Suivre*. Paris: Karthala, 1993. According to Boulanga, against all the predictions of obscurantism, stagnation, counter-development or an 'opium' of people in the service of Western powers, some of the African Churches, have been a force for renewal and mobilisation of conscience, through prayers, celebrations, Christian initiatives for dialogue, tolerance and reconciliation.

⁹³³ This rite comprised the mourning period after national catastrophes; at the same time was specifically designed to question the attitude of the monarch and their entourage during the tragedy. These processes have been evoked in Chapter six in the Presbyterian Document *Ukuri Kubaka Igihugu* mentioned earlier.

⁹³⁴ Similarly, Carlos Valle argues that the notion of Koinonia is crucial for the life in unity of a Christian community. First, community: one body which is different from uniformity or conformity but mutual responsibility in one human family for the realisation of basic human rights needs. Second, Diversity, not a stratification nor the avoidance of the problems but the respect of pluralism, otherness, a tolerant dialogue and the redistribution of power to favour a better communication between the components of the society. Third, participation and fraternity. See Valle, C., 'Communication and Mission' in *Rehabilitating Communication and Mission*, London: WACC, 1996,

VII. 3.7. Healing of Memories: The 'Acting- out'

The memory created, traded and propagated has made the Banyarwanda, Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa), irreconcilable enemies. However, memory is not automatic; it is acquired through education, propaganda, and policies that may perpetuate diverse forms of injustices, exclusions, frustrations, humiliations. This means also that there is a possibility of creating good memory in a genuine socialising process. Such a process starts with healing wounded memories.

Telling the story of the suffering and the violence is a crucial step in the healing of the memories of the victims and society. J. Kagabo, a Rwandan native exiled in France from 1973 returned in October 1994, December 1994 and again March 1995. He toured the bloodshed country and was astonished to see how little was being done to help the survivors tell their experiences of suffering. He concluded that unless the Rwandans: Bahutu and Batutsi, innocent and guilty are helped to tell their story and exorcise all the demons of evil, the tragedy could repeat⁹³⁵ itself again.

The French Philosopher, Paul Ricoeur, evokes wounded memories on the national level consisting of the suffering from a lot of vivid memories of humiliations, shame or far deeper ignominies. How does this 'acting - out' bring healing? Ricoeur suggests that the psychoanalytical cure after the trauma provides what he calls 'experiencing space' ('l'espace d'expérience')⁹³⁶. This is a kind of container, the safe place for apprehending the inheritance, the sediments of the past that constitute the fears, the prospects, the projects and anticipation. For Ricoeur, the confession expresses the emotions, the fears and distress; it discloses and pushes them out so as to deliver the victim. Throughout the confession, the consciousness of the guilt is brought to the light of the speech; "the Penitent is linked to the spoken word of their experience of absurdity, of suffering and anguish"⁹³⁷.

For Ricoeur such a critical use of memories aims at telling the story, not only from the victim's point of view, but from the enemy's. Such a work opens the way to deliverance; to mercy, forgiveness and healing instead of recycling the stories in bitterness and hatred and resentment.

Father Masinzo member of the 'Detmold Confession' Group, a survivor of the 1994 genocide, witnessed how he initiated an experience of this kind in the Karama parish, in the Catholic diocese of Butare:

J'ai vécu en cachette durant le génocide. J'ai une soeur aînée rescapée. Je pensais que si je me remettais je chercherais un pays lointain où je m'exilerais. Quand j'étais convalescent, deux vieilles dames sont venues me rendre visite. Une d'elle, en me voyant tout amaigri alors que d'habitude je suis Grand et costaud a eu pitié. Elle a tiré de son pagnon 1,000 Francs, elle me les a donnés et m'a dit qu'elle voulait me revoir en paroisse. J'avais reçu des missionnaires à Bujumbura suffisamment d'argent, mais je ne pouvais pas refuser ce don.

⁹³⁵ Kagabo, J., "Après le Génocide- Notes de Voyage". In *Les Temps Modernes*, 1995, Spécial Rwanda & Burundi 1994-1995, 50e Année, Juillet- Août 1995, no 583, pp.102-125.

⁹³⁶ Ricoeur "le Pardon Peut-il Guérir". In *Dialogue* no 190, Avril-Mai 1996, pp 3-9. Texte paru dans la *Revue 'Esprit'* Mars-Avril 1995, pp 77-82.

⁹³⁷ Ricoeur, P., *Finitude et Culpabilité*. Lvre II: *La Symbolique du Mal*, Paris, Aubier, 1960, pp.14/5.

Après un séjour de un mois en Belgique, je suis rentré en paroisse. Là j'ai écouté les gens, aussi les non-rescapées. Ce fut ma conversion.

En Avril 1995 lors des événements tragiques qui ont suivi la destruction du camp de Kibeho, j'ai vu les gens retenues aux barrières, cette-fois-ci, c'étaient des Hutu. J'ai vu qu'ils avaient les même visages peureux que les Tutsi aux barrières en 1994: la souffrance est la même pour tous. Des enfants jetaient des pierres ou même frappaient des 'abagabo' (hommes adultes). J'ai dit à ceux qui voulaient tuer pour se venger: 'vous avez perdu des membres de vos familles, vous allez perdre le ciel aussi'. J'ai du courir les collines pour la justice.

A Karama, j'ai travaillé avec les veuves et les orphelins. J'ai rassemblé toutes les veuves, et en plus les femmes qui ont leur mari en prison. Je les mettais ensemble à l'église. Là je leur disais: "écoutez-moi pendant 5 minutes...". Puis je leur disais: "comme vous m'avez écouté, maintenant vous allez écouter l'une d'entre-vous". A tour de rôle, elles parlaient de leur vie. Nous apprenions ainsi à nous écouter, à respecter la souffrance de l'autre. Ensuite nous entamions un dialogue. Après seulement, nous posions la question que feriez-vous? Elles se constituaient en équipes de vie (sur base locale). Ce qui est étonnant, c'est que leur premier besoin, c'est: qu'est-ce que Dieu peut oser nous dire? "Est-ce qu'il a encore quelque chose à nous dire?" Une Soeur qui a fait la spécialisation biblique nous aidait à lire ensemble la Bible. Le second besoin: "les coeurs des veuves sont plus escarpés que les montagnes du nord": des gens veulent abuser, profiter d'elles... Elles parlent aussi de leurs traumatisme. Un psychologue nous aidait. Ce n'est qu'ensuite qu'elles parlent de leurs problèmes matériels⁹³⁸.

In this powerful witness, the two old women represent a large fraction of Rwandans who were powerless before the tragic events. Father Masinzo said how he could read the suffering on their very hearts. Unlike him, some among the survivors have been affected by the loss of their relatives to such extent they cannot read the dilemma affecting many among the 'opposite community'.

Now, Masinzo and people of the same conviction, must undertake a heavy struggle in healing society. He broke the chains of mistrust affecting both communities and started healing trauma among both the survivors and the incriminated community. The process initiated by Masinzo - who since then was named in the SAT and moved to the diocese in Butare before he left to pursue his studies in Rome needs to be reinforced and expanded. It presents a crucial similarity with the study of Carlos Mesters based on the suffering communities in North- East Brazil. Mesters's book is a kind of dialogue between the victims of the arbitrary repression conducted by the military-bourgeoisie, the four songs of Isaiah chapters 42 to 53 and the central actor, the suffering servant. Mesters invites the 'suffering servant' not to fall for the logic of violence and revenge by imitation of the perpetrators of violence⁹³⁹.

VII. 3.8. Stopping the Cumulative Impact of Violence

The suffering and wounds cannot heal in a context of continuous repetition of violence, the circle of violence which has concerned Solon. The following story recounted by Antoine Rutayisire indicates how the impunity evoked before can create a system of rooted violence.

Our father, was butchered in broad daylight, before our very eyes, and left for dead in front of our house. He later was taken by the chief of our commune with many other Batutsi and some suspected Bahutu accused of supporting the " enemy" (Inyenzi: cockroaches) and we were told they had been shot. We never saw his body, we were never able to bury it...This kept us in a state of suspense for many years, hoping that may be he had managed to escape... When I finally came to accept my father's death I turned my anger on all the

⁹³⁸ Masinzo, J., Witness at Detmold. December 1996. Notes of the present author. See also Eliat-Eliat, B., Rencontre de Detmold (Minutes de la Rencontre), p.10.

⁹³⁹ Mesters, C., La Mission du Peuple qui Souffle, Kinshasa/ Kisangani: Editions St Paul, 1988. See also section VII.6.8.

people I had seen beating my father and looting our possessions. Every time I had a problem I always remembered the massacre scene and blamed the people... I grew to hate even their children and I remember I used to persecute one of them who was with me in secondary school. He was far younger and did not even know what his father had done to mine. He could not understand why I hated him and I never took pains to explain.. Then during the massacres of 1972-1973 we had to undergo a series of humiliating escapes, spending sleepless nights in hiding, uncertain (sic) of the future⁹⁴⁰...

Then Antoine goes on to tell how his hope to become a renowned University professor was destroyed in 1983. That year he was recruited to lecture at the National University in Rwanda, but the minister of Higher Education deselected him on the ground of ethnic balance policy. Rutayisire then abandoned his ambition of an academic career.

Commenting on the Detmold Confession from another angle, Sendashonga describes the context of the Bahutu suffering as follows:

Parler de 1959 comme point de départ de l'oppression des Tutsi par les Hutu, sans parler des injustices sociales d'avant cette année -là (et qui frappaient surtout les Hutu) revient à nier d'emblée ou à minimiser la réalité de ces injustices réduites à " certaines attitudes arrogantes et méprisantes affichées contre eux au cours de notre histoire au nom d'un ridicule complexe de supériorité ethnique". Cela revient aussi à nier la légitimité des aspirations au changement qui se sont faits jour au cours de la décennie 1950 et à nier la responsabilité des tenants du pouvoir à l'époque (pouvoir traditionnel et pouvoir colonial) dans la myopie dont ils ont fait preuve en ne préparant pas les institutions et les esprits en vue d'une évolution pacifique vers une société d'égalité et de fraternité. Pour les tenants du pouvoir traditionnel, cette myopie a été particulièrement nocive, dans la mesure où c'est elle qui a contribué à introduire la violence dans ce processus de changement qui aurait dû être pacifique. ⁹⁴¹

In Rutayisire's example, memories do not heal because of successive violence. In Sendashonga's, fear of being subjected again to past violence and the different forms of injustices, rejection and marginalisation may provoke a cycle of violence.

During this research, this writer came across a form of psychological repression and assimilation of frustration that can end in a later explosion of violence. These were some people whose relatives had been killed during the massacres and even genocide but who said that they were not 'allowed' to mourn their victims. In fact, during the genocide, people were not only killed but were also refused the right to die as human beings and to be given a grave. Many were left in the open air, thrown into rivers or put in common graves. The Catholic archbishop has put it as bluntly as this: "there will be no reconciliation if all groups are not allowed to mourn their victims" ⁹⁴². However, despite the archbishop's statement, some among the Catholic hierarchy did not manifest much enthusiasm for the exhumation of the remains of the victims wherever possible to allow a dignified burial.

In contrast, the Presbyterian Church has been engaged in helping to organise the funerals and mourning for some of the victims of the genocide. Unlike the views of some people opposing such a gesture, it must be remembered that digging up bones for good reason is biblical: the

⁹⁴⁰ Rutayisire, A., *Faith under Fire. Testimonies of Christian Bravery*, Herts: African Evangelical Enterprise, 1996, p.105.

⁹⁴¹ Sendashonga, S., "Pour le Pardon et la Justice". Réaction à la Confession de Detmold. In *Dialogue*, no 197, Bruxelles, Mars-Avril, 1997, p. 45/6.

⁹⁴² Ntuhinyurwa, (Mgr), op.cit. Kigali, March 1997.

Hebrews dug up the bones of Joseph and took them from Egypt to Canaan for burial there⁹⁴³. Funeral and mourning offer the possibility to express the pain and to exorcise a possible explosion in violence which would otherwise continue to accumulate.

Hence, a liturgy of mourning and purification becomes a solid act of reconciliation that would re-establish dignity to human life and reinstate the creation to its primary 'divine' role. Such a liturgy might involve the purification of different elements such as water, vegetation, air and individuals. Such a liturgy must compel people to accept cohesion and unity nurtured by the sacraments taken from the perspective of the cultural Rwandan notion of *Igihango*⁹⁴⁴. From now on, receiving the blood and body of Christ would cease to be a formality: it will commit the recipients to a reciprocal solidarity with those for whom Christ died; all the victims of arbitrary measures and diverse forms of injustice⁹⁴⁵.

VII. 3.9. Interpreting Suffering

Suffering and death have become so commonplace in Rwanda that a deep reflection is needed to equip Christians morally and spiritually to learn how to sustain life⁹⁴⁶ as well as to discover their theological significance. Subsequent issues to consider here range from such questions as why innocents die; why human beings easily become vectors of hatred and death. What factors have helped some people to become involved in violence while others become heroes or martyrs? And in reference to the preceding section, to reflect on what can be the 'anti-crises' values, both from the biblical perspective and the positive side of the Rwandan culture?

Then the Churches must prepare to face fundamental questions regarding suffering and death. People ask: where was God during our suffering? Why did the tragedy affect X not Y? There then must be some presuppositions from both the victims' perspective and from the perpetrators of the violence.

First, from the victim's point of view, it could be said that :

- God was there but did not want to intervene in the Rwandan conflict;

⁹⁴³ See Genesis 50.25; Exodus 13.19; Hebrews 1.22.

⁹⁴⁴ *Igihango*, a blood pact between two persons of different lineages or clans who would commit themselves to mutual fidelity till death.

In the post-apartheid era, the South Africa Council of Churches has proposed a rite of Reconciliation on the same model. The Council had invited the Churches to celebrate ceremonies of Reconciliation in which people were invited to repent either for having taken arms to defend Apartheid or having taken arms to fight for freedom thus killing innocent people caught in the crossfire, or necklacing the suspected informers.

⁹⁴⁵ SACC, *Rite of Reconciliation*, Johannesburg: 1996. The document suggests among other things that the communal confession and rite of cleansing use fire, oil, shrines of peace. Optionally there can be a libation rite. Then the participants would be invited to call upon both the spirit of ancestors and the spirit of those who died before their time as innocent victims of human blindness, those who died unknowingly defending a cruel political order to intercede on behalf of the nation. Alternatively, a cleansing rite can use a goat, water, bile, gall and so forth.

The sermons would emphasise: alienation from God and one another; God, author of reconciliation; the theology of the cross underlining sacrificial love, retribution and reparation justice; the incarnation; God, vulnerable as dependant on humanity. The lesson to draw up would be the encounter that leads us to the prophets in the age of reconstruction and development. Lastly, it will be shown that reconciliation with God is impossible without reconciliation with each other.

⁹⁴⁶ See the Detmold Confession.

- God was not there, He has too much to do elsewhere;
- or most likely, God was there and suffered with the victims.

From the point of view of the perpetrators of violence, two categories of feelings emerged often: God, didn't mind or God allowed it to happen.

But then, the same questions will be extended to whoever stands for reconstruction and rehabilitation. Where were you? What was your position during our suffering? Have you participated in our suffering, in the struggle for our liberation; have you, been neutral or siding with the violent?

From the perspective of this research, it is clear that many in Rwanda became apathetic or indifferent as in the case of the Jewish holocaust recalled by President Weizsäcker above. Hence, what is important for the future, is whether people remain unrepentant like Cain and Judas or if they would, like Peter break down in tears and shame. The position before and during the suffering is crucial for anyone: individuals or group who want to work for reconciliation.

Hans Jonas a German Philosopher from a Jewish origin discusses the Conception of God after Auschwitz. He suggests four images of God : 1. the Suffering God (image given by Hosea), God who suffers from the creation of the human being; 2. a God in becoming (God is not immutable but is sensitive to what is happening in the world); 3. a God who is concerned (He is not detached from the very reality but is implicated; He is not a magician but has left the autonomy to the world); 4. a God who is poor and fragile).

Hans Jonas thinks that God did not intervene in Auschwitz not because he did not want it but because he could do nothing. From creation, God deprived Himself of His invulnerability, thus allowed the world to be; He gave autonomy to His creation. Since then, God has nothing to offer but is dependant vis-à-vis His creatures, human beings created in the image of God become responsible for the destiny of the world and beyond, of God Himself. For H. Jonas its now up to human beings to enjoy being created and to give to God no reason to regret having created the world⁹⁴⁷.

This Jewish perspective points out the crucial issue of the use and misuse of the autonomy which God gave to human beings. The relevance of the message for the Rwandan context is a challenge to understand that God suffered with the suffering victims of the tragedy. To collectively help people recover, Job's theology of passion and revolt may be an aid to understanding the suffering of innocents though this remains God's mystery. The meditation on Job's theology will help to penetrate the enigma of evil, suffering and death. It shows that God was some how mysteriously but really present in the midst of the tragedy, accompanying the victims. Hans Jonas's message also invites Rwandans to assess how they managed the autonomy entrusted in them by God and

⁹⁴⁷ Hans, J., Le Concept de Dieu après Auschwitz. Une voie Juive, Paris: Petite bibliothèque Payot, 1994.

to foresee their key responsibility in the destiny of their nation and neighbours as part of God's creation.

VII. 4. A Listening Ecclesiology

The failure of the moral forces to fully understand or to interpret accurately the reality of the Rwandan crises shows that, it may be feasible for the Churches to live in midst of the poor but to exist for the rich. In fact, the Biblical ethos suggests that the identity of a Christian community is living in solidarity with the poor and the oppressed. The best model here is the servant-hood described in the Second Isaiah, also Jesus's life and contemporary martyrs, including Martin Luther King Jr and Bonhoeffer. Bonhoeffer and Martin Luther King Jr pioneered human rights and dignity of the 20th century. They showed that the rejection of a reign of terror always carries a cost. In choosing to oppose evil regimes instead of being the vectors of sin in the world, or curbing ourselves before absolute power and living ideologies, we must choose the route of martyrdom.

The question is how to be truly Christian without renouncing our belonging to family, clan, cultural or political identity. Ethnicity is a gift from God. But it ceases to be a glory when it is made an absolute ideological tool of oppression, exclusion and used to deny the rights of others. In fact, the "citizenship in the Kingdom of God is the only absolute, non-negotiable identity for the Christians". When a person becomes a member of the people of God through Christ, they receive a new identity which supercedes every ethnic identity though does not efface or invalidate its cultural manifestation.

Volf suggests that Christians should take a critical distance vis-à-vis their identity, that is a latitude to observe one's camp, without emotion, or partiality⁹⁴⁸. Distance can transcend the community boundaries and fears which block the possibility of listening, interacting and being challenged by others' experiences, others' ways of doing, organising and understanding things.

Before the 'Hutu power ideology' of MRND/CDR and the Interahamwe system, Nazism attempted to re-establish a primitive unity in a homogeneous tribal and racial community. They wanted to establish a cultural, religious and economic basis in which an omnipresent monolithical state would control and be capable of suppressing individual liberties in the negation of differences. R. Niebuhr suggests that democracy emerged as an effort, first to preserve the unity and the uniformity of tensions between classes, and second, to allow those classes in friction with liberty to express themselves without necessarily breaking the unity of the community⁹⁴⁹. This applies to all cultures including Rwandan but, needs, I suggest some

⁹⁴⁸ Volf, M., "Theological Perspectives on Cultural identity and Conflict". In *Ecumenical Review*, No 47, Vol.2, April 1995, pp. 195-205.

⁹⁴⁹ Niebuhr, R., *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness. A theological Vindication for Democracy and a critique of its traditional defenders*, London: Nisbet, 1945.

mechanisms of reinforcement including a listening ecclesiology as a characteristic of the Churches.

VII.5. Weeping with Hope

Telling the stories of the fracture of Rwandan society as this thesis has tried to do must be edified by the fact that the ruin has not been total. One thing which all those involved in reconstruction of Rwanda must remember, is that the Bible story shows how God can transform crises into opportunities and blessings. In the history of revelation: Flood, Sodom and Ghomorraah, Exodus, God has used only a small group of faithful human beings to renew his Creation.⁹⁵⁰

It is also important to remember that crises are always followed by a new beginning provided that there is even one remaining to stand in the gap and to worship the true God (Noah), to confess and repent (Jacob and Esau), to forgive (Joseph and his brothers) and do justice and righteousness (Micah 6.8; Rom 14.17). In the midst of despair, tensions, it is my conviction that that 'small remnant', individuals and groups, exists known and unknown.

Many people, regardless of the threats of the killers, remained united during the Rwandan tragedy; many died, others survived. Even among non- Christian circles some people have shown their inclination to sacrifice their lives for peace and human dignity. In the period before, during and after the genocide, there have been individuals and groups who have together continued to witness to the love of God in refusing to adhere to the genocide project.

Reflecting on the Church of the future, Jose Chipenda, suggested that crises are always followed by a new beginning. Chipenda invites the Churches now freed from colonialism and ideological divides to discern the signs of hope and set up programmes that emphasise Justice, Peace, Reconciliation, Reconstruction and Koinonia which binds us into a partnership and mutual commitment⁹⁵¹.

Those include not only Christians but also Muslims and even Government officials, army men and so forth⁹⁵². These are signs of hope which could resuscitate the soul of the Rwandan nation.

⁹⁵⁰ The idea of a 'small rest' has been developed by the Zairian ethicist Kā Mana. See Kā Mana. *Foi Chrétienne, Crise Africaine et Reconstruction de l'Afrique. Sens et Enjeux des Théologiens Africaines Contemporaines*, Nairobi/ Lomé/ Yaoundé: CETA-HAHO-CLE, 1992.

⁹⁵¹ Chipenda, J., "The Church of the Future". In Waruta, D., *African Church in the 21st Century. Challenges and promises*, Nairobi: AACC/ African Challenges Series, 1995, pp. 19-36.

⁹⁵² Kunath Wolfgang reported in *Stuttgart Zeitung*, of 14/12/1994 that many Muslims have been arrested and killed trying to save lives. A Hutu Muslim in Butare has saved almost 100 Tutsi in hiding them under the wood in his lorry and in conveying them towards Burundi. In Nyamirambo, Kigali, the Imam said, "now it is time for the true believer to live his faith as written in the Koran in saving lives that are in danger".

A Similar experience verified by the present author happened in Cyangugu city. Muslims blocked their home area called, 'La cité' where it was believed more than 50 people were hiding and requested their members, including those who belonged to the Interahamwe militia to protect them. This may be a sign of hope, a basis for the dialogue Islam-Christianity.

Their example will speak for the whole nation if they persist in cross-cutting political and ideological boundaries. If we do not remember and pay tribute to them, they will have died in vain⁹⁵³.

There are many stories of groups and individual bravery. In Kigeme, the family of Bishop Birindabagabo stayed in the diocese where his colleague N. Kayumba made every effort to protect him after abandoning attempts of evacuating the family through separate routes in secret⁹⁵⁴. Equally in Kigeme, M. Kayitaba, a very well known former Secondary school Head-teacher, was hidden by a widow. At the very worse period of the massacres, Kayitaba proposed leaving his hiding place in order to die alone instead of risking both their lives. The widow replied: "Michael, what sort of Christian witness would that be? What would I say to you if I had to meet you in Heaven? No if you die I will die with you"⁹⁵⁵. Kayitaba is now very active in reconciliation with his organisation, MUSECOOR. Many other groups of survivors are working hard to lay down the conditions of repentance and reconciliation⁹⁵⁶.

Equally, in a T.V. documentary film of the Irish journalist, F. Keane, the new Prefet of Butare who had just succeeded J.B. Habyarimana (no relations with President Habyarimana) dismissed and Killed by the Interim Government, is shown conveying two hundred children in a lorry towards Burundi. After that, he was, according to the film dismissed and replaced by an army officer.

⁹⁵³ Antoine Rutayisire has recently collected and published 13 short stories about "Testimonies of Christian bravery" Rutayisire, A., op.cit.

⁹⁵⁴ Meeting and talks with Kayumba and Birindabagabo, Kigeme, late April 1994.

⁹⁵⁵ Kayitaba, M., *Interview*, Detmold, December, 1996; and *witness* during the Conference on " Role of the Churches in Conflict Prevention, Human Rights and Peace Keeping", Kigali, October 1997.

⁹⁵⁶ In Ruhanga parish, Bahutu and Batutsi refugees refused to separate. They were attacked, bombarded. Almost a 1000 people, including the parish priest and his wife died within the Church. In Kacyiru, Revd F. Bashaka, the leader of a Baptist Church succeeded in dismissing the attempt made by Interahamwe militia to separate refugees. When a commando of the RPF arrived to rescue the Batutsi, they all gave the response Revd Bashaka had repeated to the Interahamwe: here are no Bahutu no Batutsi but Christians. All the 150 people were taken to Hospital Faycal where they joined other refugees under the protection of the RPF.

In Gakinjoro, Kigali, the Church in the headquarters of the Pentecostal Church, Revd Jacques Kayihura resisted with almost 700 refugees, Hutu and Tutsi from April to the capture of Kigali, 4 July 1994. Two people were reported to have died among them a driver who was captured supplying the refugees with wood. Sadly, in the aftermath of the tragedy, that Church recorded disgraceful scenes of a struggle for power and leadership. The police eventually had to intervene and the temple was closed for more than three months.

To White Fathers, Henry Branchard and Otto Meyer, in the Nyamirambo parish (Kigali) remained with the refugees. They were wounded but continued to brave the most threatening attacks of the Interahamwe. With God's help, they had some refugees rescued by the RPF.

A tribute goes to a Catholic layperson mentioned earlier in this work, Dr Laurien Ntezimana who stood firm in Butare at the risk of his life; it goes to an expatriate layperson, Marc Vaiter. A French HIV patient, Vaiter arrived in Kigali in March 1993 to start a centre for assistance to the HIV-AIDS patients. M. Vaiter rejected the offer from the French troops to evacuate and endured the hardship of the militia till the end of the war in the capital.

A more controversial figure, Father W. Munyeshaka saved the lives of many. Very familiar within the circles of the MRND, this young priest may have tried to use some strategic tools of the militia (gun, anti-bullet dress) which became his downfall. He was one of the rare people who remained in a sensitive parish with thousand of refugees caught in the crossfire of the two armies. If some people in Church defend him against the curse and accusations of others, it is because he has represented different images: he portrays a contrast to the cowardice of many among the clergy but also represents the weakness of the clergy which the Church wants to keep secret (he has been accused for attempting to abuse some refugees, i.e. abusing females).

It would be hazardous to suggest that all survivors are inclined to work for peace and reconciliation. Many want no more than revenge. What matters here is to acknowledge that the survivors can be either the resources for Reconstruction or factors of destruction. Thus the Churches ought to play a crucial role in providing a container for all the angers, frustrations and sufferings so as to make good out of evil.

It is when a container is provided that a Christian community can set up a model that breaks the barriers of hatred to allow reconciliation and reconstruction to happen. As in the case of Germany mentioned in section VII.1.1, South Africa post-Apartheid society offers an example of the healing of the nation and the Church, in particular through the activities of its Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). In South Africa, the struggle for liberation reached a high point in the liberation of Nelson Mandela in February 1990 (after 27 years of imprisonment) followed by democratic elections in April 1994. These elections were won by the ANC. Mandela became the first Black President of multi-racial South Africa. He pursued his work of reconciling the South Africans, in particular with the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) ⁹⁵⁷.

Chaired by Desmond Tutu, the Commission seeks to reveal the truth about the atrocities committed by all the actors from all sides. The Commission has the authority to offer amnesty to the perpetrators of violence in return for confessions made before the deadline of May 1997⁹⁵⁸. The person seeking for amnesty for gross violation of human rights must apply to the commission within a deadline time. The applicant must provide the details on the circumstances of the offence including whether the offence was executed as an order or personal motivation. In the context, amnesty is offered on the basis of full disclosure and public confession before the public hearings of the TRC. According to him, the "majority of victims and their relatives want little more than this basic knowledge" so that people know how society arrived at such a degrading and dehumanising state.

What South Africa society wants to have is a disclosure of a complete picture of the causes, nature and extent of gross violations of human rights that allows society to hear and understand the atrocities organised by the apartheid regime. Inspired by the German Philosopher Karl Jasper,

⁹⁵⁷ Villa-Vicencio, C., "Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) A different kind of justice. The South Africa Truth and Reconciliation Commission" (1996). See also *Sojourners*, Vol. 25 No 4 July-August 1996, pp. 10-11. Documentation from Prof. Forrester's collection.

⁹⁵⁸ The ANC as a party has acknowledged its mistakes while the NP refuses to confess.

Villa-Vicencio suggests that the TRC gives importance to the distinction between the criminal, political, moral and metaphysical aspects of justice.

The dominant model of retributive justice offers no alternative to punishment. It demands an eye for eye, blood for blood. From the TRC perspective it is devoid of justice. TRC offers amnesty and a political restorative model as an alternative to forms of criminal justice. Finally, it offers ethical, cultural and theological principles as source of true justice.

This means: 1. that the community is involved in finding new ways of dealing with criminals in accepting communal responsibility instead of leaving the matter between the victim and the perpetrator; 2. makes the perpetrator contribute to society rather than become a burden; 3. the political and personal apology which of course results from a personal and spiritual condition that transform the individuals (thus pedagogical work of the moral forces).

Likewise, the Churches in Rwanda are faced with the enormous task of persuading the government to create a moral culture that enables society to overcome the legacy of years of violence. Telling the stories is a form of therapy. But it needs more, a programme of reparation.

Epilogue

This work has explored the pilgrimage of the Rwandan narrative. It recounted how the breakdown of the relational harmony has allowed some people to inflict much suffering and death on their fellow countrymen. It has highlighted the unequivocal role of the Churches in planting and maintaining the ideology of supremacy together with other major actors, the colonial rulers and the local elites, the Batutsi before the independence and the Bahutu after that period. It has also debated the role of the leadership in the post-independence period marked by ethno-politics. It became inevitable to underline the responsibility of the ethno-historical scholarship in the formation and fixing of prejudices and stereotypes which generated the 'histoire ressentiment' in the mentalities of Rwandans. It showed that this process created a lot of enmity, hatred and violence propagated by sectarian groups in some media sections culminating in the 1994 genocide.

That said, the contribution of the Churches of Rwanda in the promotion of the social and economic activities has been outstanding. This is not however the aim of this work which, instead has focused on the issue of the absence of spiritual and moral guidance to society. An evaluation of the experiences that are happening at the grass-roots in the post-genocide era indicates that, despite their spontaneity and enthusiasm, they have not yet reached the peak. They have not yet broken through the fortress mentality of the ecclesial elite to enable them to become prophets of their time.

The chances of success for a process of healing to reach a holistic reconciliation starts necessarily with a genuine gesture from the Church hierarchy to accept their guilt and that of the nation, to confess and repent as did the German, South African and the Japanese Churches, Christian groups in Ireland and hopefully some Rwandans who made the 'Confession of Detmold' and the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda. To contribute to the search for a solution this thesis proposes a 'Repentance-Identification' as the first step the Churches should take in approaching the issue of confession and repentance. Once their conscience is cleansed, then they will feel freer to elaborate a framework for repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation for society.

This research suggests that the Gospel crosses ethnic boundaries and creates a new identity. It then envisions both a model of Koinonia structure sustained by a listening ecclesiology for the Church to help society end its tragic past. Koinonia, as a way people live together, share in worship and fellowship, must perpetually refresh itself in a transforming spiritual renewal enhanced by acts of repentance, truth - searching and telling which constitute the basis for a genuine reconciliation.

As a result, people will learn to curb their ethnic belonging under the banner of their Christian identity; they will learn to commit themselves to being the gift of life for their neighbours, sharing their humanity infused by the values of the Gospel which offer the chance for Rwandans to work for the kingdom of God, a kingdom of Justice, Peace and Joy.

To pursue, enhance and carry out such a project, the world-wide Christian community must assist the Rwandan Churches to be equipped for the training of outstanding leadership, clergy, men and women whose mind-sets are liberated from the chains of ethnicism. These must be free-thinkers, open-minded, guided by the biblical ethos of love, justice and justice so as to build up a dignified moral and sustainable society. This involves what Karamaga calls "détribalisation de la mentalité", which means to acknowledge in each human being, the body and blood of Christ who makes us brothers/sisters. Out of such a process would certainly emerge a new generation of human beings converted to share humanity and 'Rwandanity' instead of valuing the Bahutu or Batutsi identity which has proved up to now to be fragile in resisting against ideological propaganda.

Glossary of the Kinyarwanda Terms

Abacurabwenge (lit. creators of knowledge): Specialists of the genealogies and biographies as “legal foundation of the reigning dynasty”.

Abahuzamugambi (lit.those who have the same goal): Militia of the extremist party CDR, ally of the MRND.

Abaka: (lit.those who shine) . Name given to those who converted during the 1930s Protestant Revival. See also Abarokore: the saved.

Abakambazimana (lit. those who praise Gose): volunteers of peace formed by the Butare Catholic Service of Theological Animation.

Abantu b’Imana (lit. people of God). Name chosen by adherents of religious movements who split from the major Christian denominations in 1980s and who were severely repressed by the regime.

Abasizi: poets.

Abatekereza (lit.those who reason): memorialists who kept the official or family genealogies.

Abatware: chiefs

Abiru: influential ritual councilors of the court. They kept the esoteric code of the monarchy.

Akazu (lit.small house): the clique surrounding the monarch, then after the independence, a clique close to the president who ruled over legal official institutions.

Amasasu: a violent group formed in the army to oppose the peace process.

Amoko: a generic term designing both the clan or ethnic group

Babanda (Banda); Bagesera (Gesera); Bahindiro (Hindiro); Basinga (Singa), Bega, Banyiginya, Benengwe : ancient clans of Rwanda.

Bafulero, Banyamurenge, Bembe: three ethnic groups in the Province of South Kivu (R.D.Congo).

Banyarwanda (Bahutu, Batutsi, Batwa): respective “ethnic” groups of Rwanda. See also **Gahutu, Gatutsi, Gatwa**: sons of Kanyarwanda, mythical ancestor of the Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa

Barenge: population known in the Rwandan tradition as inhabiting the land before the present-day occupants.

Buberuka, Budaha, Bufumbira, Bugoyi, Buha, Buhoma, Bukonya, Bukoba, Bukunzi, Bumbogo, Bunyabungo, Bunyoro, Bushiru, Busozo, Bwanamwali, Bwimba, Gisaka, Mubali, Bugesera: ancient autonomous kingship of Rwanda

Butare, Cyangugu, Byumba, Gikongoro, Gisenyi, Gitarama, Kigali, Kibungo, Kibuye, Ruhengeri: administrative divisions called Prefectures.

Cyimumugizi, Kiragutse, Mpatsibihugu: the substitutes of Karinga, the emblem-drum of Karinga.

Gacaca: Traditional form of lineages and clan’s mediation of the conflict

Humiriza Nkuyobore: close your eyes so that I lead you: name given to the totalitarian policy of the MRND regime

"Hutu Pawa": name of the extremists groups who, under the MRND and CDR political parties elaborated and executed the 1994 genocide and massacres.

Ibimanuka: those who descended from sky. According to the myth of ibimanuka, the Banyiginya reigning dynasty

Ibyitso: Accomplices. Name given to members of the Batutsi community or those favorable to the power sharing with the RPF.

Igihango: blood brotherhood

Ikiguri-Nunga: the “zero network” or the nucleus of the violent groups of the Habyarimana regime

Ikinani (lit.the invincible). Nickname Habyarimana gave himself during an extraordinary Congress of the MRND on April, 29, 1991

Imana: God

Imbaga (masses): name of a independent newspaper belonging to the rural co-operative movement.

Imvaho (news): A governmental newspaper

Inkotanyi: fighter in Kinyarwanda. Name of a traditional militia adopted by the militants and the army of the RPF.

Inkuru Niziza: good news. Name of a small american christian community of Protestant tendency based in Kigali from 1960s.

Interahamwe: those who attack together. Militia of the MRND

Inyabutatu Nyarwanda: the Rwandan tripartite (Bahutu, Batutsi, Batwa)

Inyarubuga: name of a traditional militia

Inyenzi: cockroaches. Name of the 1960s rebellion made of the 1959 refugees.

Inzirabwoba (lit. those who never have fear): name of a traditional militia adopted by the Habyarimana regime for his army.

Kamarampaka: Referendum. Reference to the 25 September referendum in which the Banyarwanda rejected the monarchy.

Kangura (lit. make awake): Newspaper of the extremists groups initiated in 1990

Karinga: the emblem-drum of the Banyiginya-Bahindiro reigning dynasty.

Kinyamateka: the Roman Catholic newspaper

Kinyarwanda: language of Rwanda.

Kivu Lake: a natural border between Rwanda and R.D.Congo

Mariamamu: a prophetess of Banyamurenge background who started teaching in 1970s in Abela village, south-east of Congo.

Mbonyumutwa; Kayibanda: respectively presidents of Rwanda, January to September 1961; October 1961 to July 1973

Munyoro, Muhima : clans of Uganda

Mwami: King in Rwanda, Burundi and east of R.D.Congo

Nduga or Nduga élargi: name given to the regions of Rwanda other than Gisenyi, Ruhengeri and the part of Byumba other than Buganza and Mutara.

Rubanda nyamwinshi (the vast majority): designation of the Bahutu by the "Hutu extremist groups".

Rukiga: The opposite of Nduga. Part of the country comprising Ruhengeri, Gisenyi and Byumba.

Ubuhake: contract of clientship in the pre-colonial and colonial Rwanda

Uburetwa: forced labour

Ubuse: relationship of jokery existing between members of different clans; ritual of purification of a land or the space for the installation of a house and its inauguration.

Ukuri kubaka igihugu: the truth that build up the country

Umuganda: Activities of mutual aid and solidarity in Rwanda, Umuganda manual activities were made constitutionally compelling by the MRND Regime in 1974 for at least one day per week for each Rwandan.

Umukristo mu Mjyambere (the Christian in development): Name of an ecumenical group initiated in 1990s by Father Blancharch to reflect on the political changes. See in Bibliography the list of various publications in Kinyarwanda.

Umunyamuryango wa TRAFIPRO: Newspaper of the TRAFIPRO trade company

Umwami: monarch in the kingships of Rwanda and Burundi

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A number of informants wished not to be identified. A confidential list is deposited at the University of Edinburgh for embargo for a 10 years period, starting at the date of the acceptance of the Thesis:

Code	Date of Interview
Ba.1	April 1994
Bm.2	March 1995
Bs3	June 1994
Ce4	July 1996
Dm5	July 1996
Church P.	Authored the messages to Habyrimana Chap.IV
He6	April 1994
Hk.7	Authored article in chapter IV
Hg.8	April 1994
Ks.9	April 1994
Kg.10	April 1994
Kn.11	April 1994
Me.12	March 1995
Ns.13	April 1994
Nj14	April 1994
Np.15	June 1995
Rj16	April 1994
Sc17	April 1994
Tj18	April 1994
Tm19	April 1994
Ut.20	April 1994
B.h.22*	March 1997
N.pc.21*	December 1996.

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